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The Left and Party Democracy

The most revealing moment during Monday night's *Panorama* discussion on the Labour Party came when one of the spokesmen for the Campaign for Labour Democracy firmly asserted 'but the Labour Party *works* on delegation'. Historically she was, no doubt, correct – but it is precisely this constitutional tradition that lies at the heart of the party's present internal debate. The membership numbers involved are, after all, no longer of a kind to demand long and elaborate chains of representation: five out of six constituency parties could easily get their entire memberships into a single hall. Why, then, the wariness often found on the Left in face of the argument that, if the powers of constituency parties are to be strengthened, then their structure and composition will need to be looked at as well? The answer, harsh though it may sound, is that people – even within the Labour Party – seldom rush forward to give up what they already control. For the *Tribune* Group, as this year's NEC elections once again demonstrated, the constituency parties – as they are at present organised – constitute their one real claim to a power-base. Little wonder, then, that figures like Mr Eric Heffer have been found this week warning against 'false prophets' and calling on conference delegates to 'be on their guard'. Everyone may know that the Labour Party's present national organisation is a husk – but at least it is *Tribune*'s own husk.

Such an attitude is nevertheless profoundly depressing. Court-room arguments about who is and who is not entitled to sit on constituency GMCs scarcely provide an advertisement for internal party democracy. If Mr Nicholas Scott had been defeated ten days ago in Chelsea, he would at least have had the option of putting his case to his whole Tory association: it is not a liberty that the Labour Party offers Ms Colquhoun. Her fate has, to all intents and purposes, been decided by a group of barely 40 people meeting behind closed doors – and few of those who characterise themselves as 'Campaigners for Labour Party Democracy' have even had the grace to turn a hair. At least when 18 years ago Mr Nigel Nicolson was dismissed by the Tory 'activists' of Bournemouth East and Christchurch he was allowed the dignity of having his notice served on him by a postal vote of some 7,500 Tory members – a vote, incidentally, which, despite the virtual unanimity of the local Executive against him, gave his opponents a bare majority of only 91 votes. By contrast, Ms Colquhoun is expected to accept her marching orders from a group of 42 'delegated' representatives, 18 of whom voted against her dismissal anyway.

In the 1950s and the 1960s the Left was never shy of denouncing the 'exclusive brethren' attitudes of the small right-wing caucuses who controlled certain inner city constituencies, notably in North London. It was the Left that stood for an 'open door' policy, while the Right often appeared to equate membership of the Labour Party with election to a private club. It is a wry comment on the ability of power to corrupt that the roles could now be said to be reversed. In fact they *are* reversed – for this month's bulletin of the right-wing Campaign for Labour Victory actually urges giving 'all party members a voice' in candidate selection and re-selection (a demand that *Panorama* viewers may remember left the so-called champions of 'Labour Democracy' looking distinctly queasy on Monday night).

Of course, only in a country as conditioned to a closed political system as Britain could there even be any question about the rights of party members as a whole to choose their representatives at both a local and a national level. Democracy exercised by indirect means can never be anything more than a boneless wonder – and those who are, rightly, dissatisfied with it at the level of national leadership would immensely strengthen their case if they first set about eradicating the practice at the party's base. That cannot be done by a process designed to bring about the group aggrandisement of GMCs: it can only be done by a frank recognition that the slogan 'one man, one vote' does not lose its validity once it touches the sensitive nerve of the Labour Party's own internal structure.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Sanitisation by Consent

Sussex is a beautiful place, but it is one of the counties of the damned. It is full of wealth and violence. The very names of the houses give the game away – Mr Justice Melford Stevenson's house, Truncheons, being perhaps the most famous. All Sussex houses have plural names like that: Truncheons, Crowbars, Hammers, Tongs. I spent the weekend at a friend's house, Breezeblocks, and motored back to Brighton for the Labour Party conference. Brighton and Hove are at the very heart of the corruption of Sussex; they are 'twinned' or *jumelées* as the French call it, with Sodom and Gomorrah. It is here one comes to practice the more expensive kinds of perversion – botulism, embolism, shamanism. Brighton at high-tea time glows like a corpse. By day, its appearance is hideously ravaged. When the present owners of Brighton inherited the place, much of it was in a state of terrible disrepair. The owners of Brighton knew exactly what to do about that – they pulled it down. Then they set about finding the most obnoxious architects, who eagerly designed some very large, unpleasant, functionless buildings to replace their offending predecessors. Unpolitical people imagine that Blackpool is tatty, vulgar and new, whereas Brighton is beautiful and old. This is more or less the reverse of the truth. Blackpool is in very good nick. The old Winter Gardens are utterly charming and provide the perfect setting for a large gathering. This year Brighton has hit back with a new conference centre, and the poor old Labour Party has had the misfortune to try it out.

The conference centre is the major political fact of this week. Its exterior is drab enough to make you weep. Inside, the designers have caught triumphantly that quality of 'inspissated gloom' which Dr Johnson noted in *Macbeth*. If you stand by the rostrum and look up to the galleries, it is quite impossible to see the expressions on the faces of the observers. They are mere specks on the horizon. If you stand at the back of the hall and attempt to listen to a controversial speech you will find that the controversy fails to carry beyond the first few rows. Every sentence has been sanitised by the time it reaches your ears. From certain positions in the hall, you will be able to enjoy the famous echo – I heard the whole of Callaghan's speech twice over – which will no doubt win the acoustical engineers a few awards. The place is really an enormous Moog synthesiser. It has no ceiling, by the way, but instead a curious and depressing system of catwalks and pipes, interspersed with glaring lights. The microclimate of the hall is its final recommending feature – you can be freezing in a mysterious wind while, a few yards away, conscientious delegates are wilting in the heat.

Everybody is wondering why nothing has happened this week, and they are all coming up with the explanation that the conference hall is at fault. Certainly there can be no theatrical intimacy in this sort of aircraft hanger. But that is only part of the story. The conference has been sanitised by consent. It is quite the opposite of last year's affair. Where last year there was a financial crisis and a fractious Left-wing, this year there is financial success and an obedient, united, generous-minded, forgiving, understanding, receptive, cheerful, listless gathering of thoroughly respectable chaps and chapesses. Everyone is bored out of their mind, and delighted to be so bored. Everyone is aware that nothing is going on, but the will to make something happen has been well and truly sapped. 'It makes very good television,' was one cabinet opinion. Good television, in this context, is precisely the opposite of what a television producer would call good television.

It's curious, in a way, that the Labour Party should feel more able to have a public row during a sterling crisis than during a period of financial stability. People say, ah, but what is keeping the delegates quiet is the prospect of a general election. This is, after all, they say, the election conference. The trouble is, however, that there is no particular expectation that Callaghan will go to the country next year. He wants, say his colleagues, to have as long an election campaign as possible. He wants to give Margaret Thatcher as great an opportunity as possible to make some big mistake, to lose her patience or nerve. He also wants to allow the effects of any economic improvement to sink into the minds of the electorate. There is, of course, a theory that if a government delays too long it is seen to be avoiding the people. But this theory is hardly proven. Besides, it might well be that people are still sufficiently sick of elections to be grateful for respite. At all events, one does not get much of a feeling here that there is an election just around the corner. The calmness and docility of the conference may be explained in two other ways.

First there is the theory that after last year's rows people just feel a bit penitent. They spent a long time then telling the Government they were doing the wrong things. The Government took not the blindest bit of notice, and instead has been able to come back with some successes to report. Few people now have quite the heart to say 'You're still on the wrong tack. We were right last year.' The second theory says that this is not simply a once-off fit of penitence. Something has actually changed in the Labour Party. Some historical arguments have actually been concluded and some wounds healed. Take for instance the question of the Common Market. Is it any longer a divisive issue? I think not. The tendency on the Left is now much more to talk of expanding the thing out of existence, or of reforming it from within. Or take the alternative strategy. Do the alternative strategists believe in it any more? Have they not passed through a crisis in which the alternative strategy was defeated, and is it not now more or less dead and buried? This judgment may seem a little premature, but it is supported by a good deal of evidence.

Take for example the case of Peter Shore. A year ago, or less, he was seen as adamant on the question of the Common Market, and a strong supporter of the alternative strategy. He believed at that time that if all conditions were right, and if there was a coordinated effort in all departments, an alternative course could be taken. Today he is much cooler about that alternative, and although he feels justified by events in his opposition to the Common Market he considers that there are two possibilities for the future: we could get out, or we could equally well reform from within. But he is also, and has always been, a firm supporter of financial probity. Shore's popularity with the Right has been growing palpably. He is not less popular with the Left. In the NEC elections he failed to make it, but his vote improved considerably. He is, in short, on the way up.

It was interesting to see the image Shore projected on *Nationwide* this week. 'People get me wrong,' he said, 'I am not an economist, I am a historian.' And he went on to explain that the impulse of his political philosophy was a sense of past achievements, achievements of which the country should be proud, and on which he would wish to build for the future. What he was after, it seemed, was the image of the patriot. And he is certainly in a strong position to claim that banner as his own. There is, after all, no reason why the Tories should be allowed to posture as the only patriots. Nor indeed, I suppose, why they should be allowed to posture as the only conservatives. Certainly from this week's conference, from Callaghan's speech and the deep impression it seems to have made on the delegates, the Labour Party has emerged as a thoroughly conservative and conventionally-minded group. With any luck, and with this sort of management, we may well see a conservative victory at the next election.

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Peter Townsend

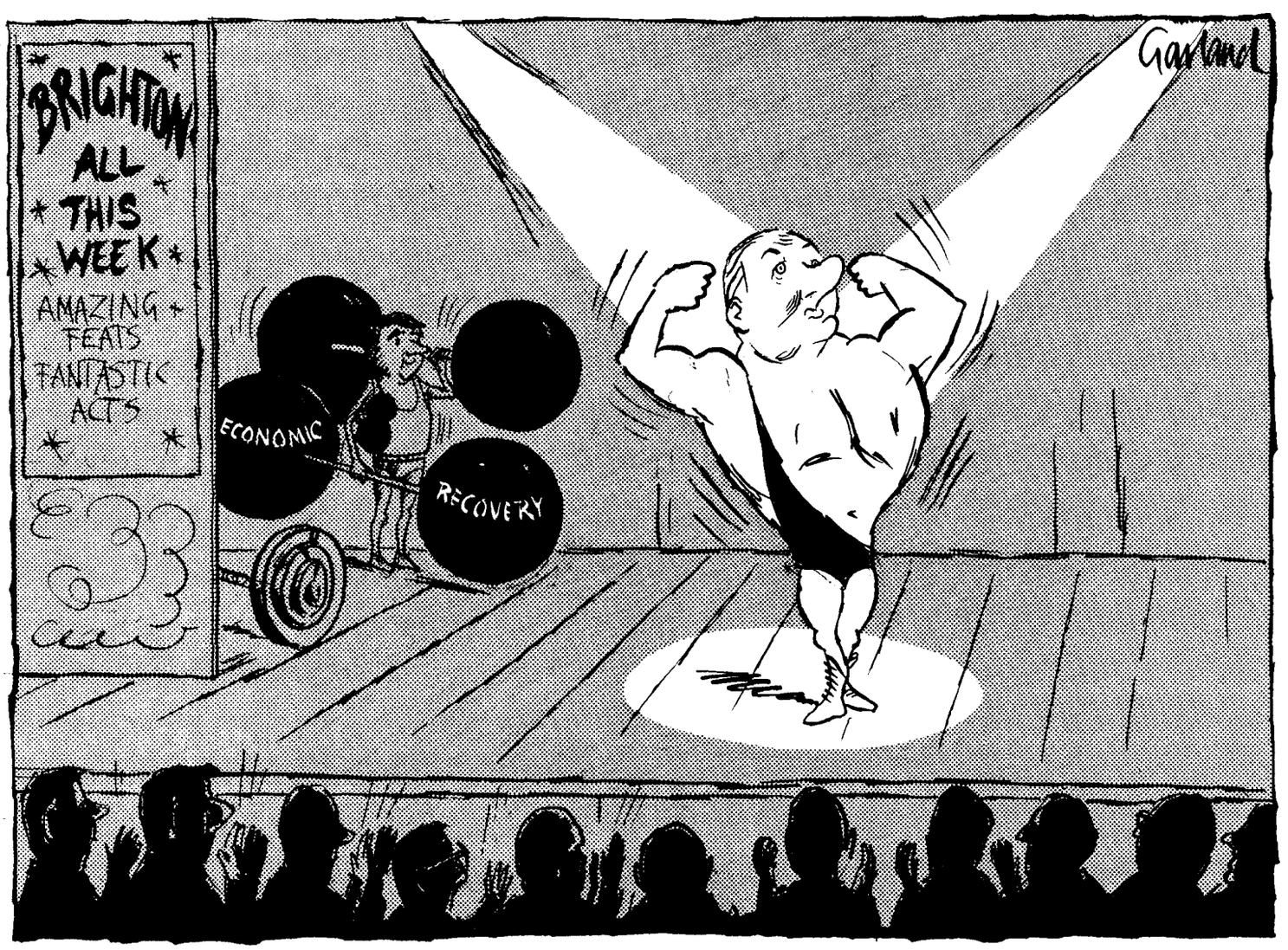
The Neglect of Mass Unemployment

Until the late 1960s full employment seemed to be one of the first principles of socialist philosophy – a principle which distinguished the Labour movement from the Tories in a fundamental way. It was a comfortable assumption from which we were first rudely parted in 1967. In that year the average number of unemployed rose to over half-a-million without Labour ministers being visibly alarmed or mortified. On the contrary, we were nursed into accepting a temporary higher level of unemployment as a necessary condition of economic recovery – especially in the speeches of Harold Wilson. That was territory surrendered without even a fight. The failure to defend full employment, therefore, has a history spanning ten years.

Large-scale unemployment, however, has a more complex structure than is supposed in much political discussion. In the first place it is tied to the structure of employment; and this has to be unravelled and explained if any really effective counter-unemployment strategy is to be developed. A so-called 'full employment policy' which simply created millions more lowly-paid and insecure workers, or conveniently labelled more of the unemployed as occupationally deprived people, dependent housewives or the handicapped and disabled, would not be worth the paper it was written on. Unemployment is only one aspect of insecurity and inequality in capitalist society and can be understood only in that context.

Why is the structure of unemployment so complex? Part of the answer is familiar or easily accepted, and is to do with age, duration of unemployment, employment history, level of skill and occupational class. Official unemployment is a phenomenon which disproportionately affects the young and late middle-aged. Of 1,622,000 unemployed in Britain in July 1977, 313,000 were under 18 and 708,000 under 25. Of these 708,000 as many as 134,000 had been unemployed continuously for more than six months. Yet the young are on the whole better educated, better qualified and longer educated than the middle-aged, and if we were to claim that unemployment was the result of deficient skills we would have to impugn the present systems of education and industrial training and not the lack of retraining centres for people in middle life. And it is of course impossible to say that the unemployed could get jobs if they wanted to, since notified vacancies are currently little more than 10 per cent of total numbers unemployed. It is also important to note that the unemployment rate among the registered disabled is currently 14 per cent; that there are nearly as many disabled people unemployed who are considered by the Department of Employment to be registrable as there are who are actually so registered, but that both registered and unregistered unemployed disabled account for only 9 per cent of the total unemployed.

In analysing unemployment the relationship with class must above all be understood. The chances of being unemployed increase for those in the lower ranks of the occupational hierarchy and the unemployment rate among unskilled workers is very high. Studies of the unemployed in the last few years by Hill, Daniel and Marsden, and most recently in his evidence to the Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth by Geoff Norris, have demonstrated the vulnerability of those in occupations at the foot of the hierarchy not only to being unemployed at any particular time, but to having recurrent spells of unemployment, and part-time, seasonal and low-paid employment. In July there were 431,000 general labourers on the registers of the unemployed, compared with 8,000 notified vacancies – or 53 unemployed men for every relevant job vacant. In this situ-



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ation it is absurd for employers to refuse to consider for jobs men and women who have been out of work more than a few weeks.

But the disproportionately high rate of *current* unemployment among manual, and particularly unskilled, workers has to be related to the structure of insecurity as affecting manual workers. Jobs are more insecure, notice shorter, fringe benefits comparatively smaller or rarer, hours of work more often unsocial, conditions of work worse and risks of illness, accident and death greater. The comfort and virtual unsackability of many non-manual staff and key skilled manual grades in a capitalist system is paid for both by a large number of marginal jobs, and the dispensability of young people who have come into a system governed in part by the principle of seniority. Some jobs on the margins of those controlled by firms are added or terminated from time to time, depending on trends in economic fortunes. Correspondingly, people in work, especially in the lower manual grades, may experience occasional or successive spells off work or, at worst, long term unemployment. There are not two broad states of employment and unemployment, but a hierarchy of states from whole-time secure employment through discontinuous employment to continuous unemployment. It is a continuum.

Expanding Work

Socialists must also beware restricted definitions of unemployment. Sir Keith Joseph and others have attempted to minimise its scale by trying to exclude from the total numbers categories of handicapped people and those between jobs. The real problem is, however, not one of overestimation but underestimation. In addition to the registered unemployed there are those of working age who are looking for work but not registered at an exchange. The Census of 1971 found 400,000 more unemployed than were registered with the Department of Employment. In 1972 a government inter-departmental working party conceded that there were at least an additional quarter of a million. We can regard this as a minimum addition to the present numbers officially registered.

There are other people of working age who would enter employment if there were more work available, or if conditions were right and society were to encourage it. The number of men remaining at work has fallen dramatically in the last 20 years. There are also many active people of pensionable age who would like, or be prepared, to undertake, productive employment of some kind. Retirement for some is a euphemism for unemployment and current proposals to pension off more people in late middle age are short-sighted expedients which ignore long-term problems of both a social and economic nature. Any acknowledgement of the overlap between our concepts of unemployment and retirement allows us to see more clearly that the definition of the *scope* of, and access to, employment is more a matter of social decision, after public consultation and debate, than a matter to be left to market forces. Our realisation of the *social* determinants of policy arises in part from the artificial divorce between the employed and retired populations at an arbitrary pension age, but also in the distribution of overtime work in a small labour force instead of developing incentives to retain a larger labour force. The redistribution, equalisation and reorganisation of work is as big a question for socialists as the redistribution, equalisation and reorganisation of income.

So the Labour movement has a choice either of continuing to drift meekly with international capitalism and weakly attempting to moderate or minimise the human consequences of predatory economic imperialism by a mixture of tax adjustment and largely cosmetic job creation schemes; or of establishing an alternative structure of full, equitable employment for all the population, other than children and the severely disabled. The creation of full employment is as much a social as an economic objective.

The Government needs to get more actively into the business of expanding work of both a productive and social nature, relating public ownership plans to a policy of full employment, laying down guidelines for work opportunities for women, pensioners and disabled people, together with the supporting services, like day nurseries, which may be required, identifying meaningless or stultifying types of employment which ought to be phased out, and improving the conditions, hours and quality of work. Society has for generations accepted a responsibility for defining the minimum amenities of the home, but apart from a narrow responsibility for health and safety in factories and offices, has not yet accepted a responsibility for defining the minimum amenities of work.

There are various routes to the exercise of a more coherent employment policy. One is to set up a powerful standing committee of cabinet; another to establish a standing Full Employment Commission to work out the principles and objectives decided by the Government and especially briefs passed to it by the standing committee. From 1974, when for example, the Swedes set up a Royal Commission on long-term employment policy various steps have been taken – location policies to assist industrial development in areas where employment was declining, removal and starting grants, labour market training, improved opportunities for women. The Swedish employed population, unlike that of most European countries, has gone on increasing; and at a time of world recession counter-active measures to keep down the unemployment rate have ben successful. In all the Nordic countries labour market policies have been far more positive during 1975-1977, and more important *independently* of economic management, than in Britain. Measures included have been the bringing forward of public investments and public orders to industry, stockpiling support, help for training instead of lay-offs and dismissals, new recruitment in the public sector and temporary employment in relief work projects in both industry and the service sector. (*Labour Market Policy in the Nordic Countries During the Recession of 1975-1976*, Report of the Nordic Labour Market Committee following a meeting in Oslo in September 1976.)

Short-Term Palliatives

A major new full employment policy, and not only the adoption of an alternative economic strategy, is required in Britain. The Government's contribution has been small and has been limited to the Temporary Employment Subsidy, the Job Creation Programme, the Job Release Scheme, the Work Experience Scheme and the Youth Employment Subsidy. None of the measures makes any contribution to the long-term number of jobs and they are all short-term palliatives. The Job Release and Youth Employment Schemes are just methods of redistributing jobs from older to younger workers. In the summer the Secretary of State for Employment announced the next stage of the job creation programme. In various forms this had existed in Canada (the Canadian Local Initiatives Program), the United States, Denmark, the Netherlands and elsewhere before being introduced in Britain in 1975. From April next year job creation for those over 18 in its present form will cease and two separate schemes will take its place. One will offer 8,000 jobs (for a maximum of one year) to supervisors of young people's work experience schemes. The other is the Special Temporary Employment Programme, for people between 19 and 24 and those over 24 who have been unemployed for more than one year. The total cost is £68m. a year and there is little chance of employing more than 25,000 – or less than 2 per cent of the present number of unemployed.

The persistence of the official unemployment rate over 1½ million has created large-scale misery and poverty. The rising proportion of long-term unemployed means that living standards continue to worsen. Contrary to much supposition the net incomes of unemployed people and their families are

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Roger Woddis

Clean What Up?

Lord Hiccup replenished his brandy
And fondled the dog on his lap,
Recalling with tearful nostalgia
The days when he wore a cloth cap.

He thought of the flames in the foundry,
He thought of the years on the dole,
The winter they had to burn Grannie
Because she was cheaper than coal.

And Jarrow, Red Ellen, the party,
Dry bread and three penn'orth of bones,
And how, now a baron of Labour,
He'd like to belabour Jack Jones.

Abolish the baksheesh explosion?
Keir Hardie was long laid to rest,
And gone were the days when a favour
Was something you pinned to your breast.

Idealists lived by a legend,
Belief was a banner held high,
But what was the point of a byword
If you couldn't put anything by?

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far below those at work. The evidence for last year was that the average unemployed man with wife and two children received in national insurance and supplementary benefit an income of 45 per cent of the average man with wife and two children. The percentage is lower still for single people and married couples without dependents. The proportion of unemployed people drawing unemployment insurance benefit has been falling and the proportion drawing earnings-related benefits has remained small. There is no long-term rate for the unemployed receiving supplementary benefit. Few unemployed families receive 'exceptional circumstances' additions. Unemployment insurance benefit ceases after one year. In each of these three respects the living standards of unemployed people certainly need further protection.

Yet it is paradoxical to pay out so many cash benefits when the creation of long-term jobs would cost little more in the short run, and represent a saving in the long run. From November the ordinary rate of supplementary benefit for a married couple will be £23.80. Rent would take that amount to over £30 on average. The gap between figures like this and minimum earnings is not large and the price of not filling it by creating jobs – in lost production and poorer services as well as poverty and despair – could be very large. The Government expects a high rate of unemployment to continue into the 1980s. Instead of using that rate to damp down home demand and hence the cost of imports the Government should be devising policies to encourage self-sufficient production in substitution of imports and simultaneously reduce unemployment and the balance of payments deficit. The Government is condoning long-term mass unemployment and condoning greater and greater inequalities among the employed. In both respects the Labour movement must be awakened to action.

Robin Blackburn

Ten Years Without Che

In a pamphlet entitled *Tactics and Ethics* published during the Hungarian Commune of 1919, Georg Lukacs declared:

> Everyone who at the present time opts for communism is therefore obliged to bear the same *individual* responsibility for each and every human being who dies for him in the struggle, as if he himself had killed them all . . . From the ethical point of view, no one can escape responsibility with the excuse that he himself is only an individual on whom the fate of the world does not depend. Not only can this not be known objectively for certain, because it is always possible that it will depend precisely on the individual, but this kind of thinking is also made impossible by the very essence of ethics, by conscience and the sense of responsibility.

I have no doubt that Che Guevara, who was killed ten years ago this week, was animated by exactly this conviction when he decided to give up all his official posts in Havana and return to the hazardous and hunted life of the guerrilla. The year that Guevara left Cuba was that in which US marines arrived in Santo Domingo to smother popular rebellion, in which Vietnamese peasants were subjected to massive aerial bombardment, in which half-a-million Indonesian communists were massacred. In the midst of events like these, Guevara found it impossible to continue debating the strategy of economic development in a country where the decisive battle had already been won. Guevara wrote that the 'solidarity' offered to the Vietnamese by the Russian and Chinese leaders was like the cheers of the Roman crowd urging on a favourite gladiator.

To a generation in revolt against the cynicism and *realpolitik* of traditional left-wing politics, Guevara's moral qualities gave him a special authority and pre-eminence. As a medical student Guevara displayed no interest in politics, spending his vacations studying the conditions of life, and death, in the destitute backlands of South America. It was his experience as a doctor in the Andes, where the Indian was old at 30 and dead at 40, that converted Guevara into a revolutionary. Marxism explained for him why capitalism meant popular misery and degradation, policed by military dictatorship and imperialist intervention.

But although Guevara accepted Marxism as a social and economic doctrine, he remained uninterested in conventional Marxist politics. In Guevara's Marxism moral commitment was wedded not to politics but directly to a practical concern with technique, whether as guerrilla commander or as Minister of Industries. What the downtrodden masses of Latin America needed to encompass their liberation, he thought, was a necessary minimum of military and industrial technique. Guevara's writings on guerrilla warfare concern the vital importance of a good supply of boots and they urge the guerrilla commander to set up popular clinics and schools as soon as possible; they say nothing about the overall context of national politics.

This missing element in Guevara's Marxism, the specifically political dimension, did not seem a flaw to many who were attracted by his absolute moral integrity. Guevara was himself more aware than others that his formation as a revolutionary was perilously incomplete. During the Cuban revolution Guevara was happy to leave overall political strategy to Fidel Castro. It was Castro who brought together the alliance of forces that overthrew Batista; and in the critical period after Batista's overthrow it was Castro who isolated the counter-revolution, led the popular take-over of factories, farms and sugar-mills, and directed the diplomatic duel with the United States.

In Bolivia Che Guevara lacked any comparable strategic grasp of politics. In his handbook on guerrilla warfare he had contented himself with the maxim that once all means of peaceful agitation had been suppressed – as was the case in most of Latin America – then it was the duty of the revolutionary to take up the gun. In Bolivia such a course of action neglected the traditions of the highly politicised miners who would not lightly turn away from the trade union and parties they had fought to create in decades of bitter struggle; it also underestimated the problems of winning over the Bolivian peasant.

This is not to say that Che's lofty appeals were devoid of practical impact. His life proves the prodigious, but also incalculable, effect that morality can have on politics. One of his last public speeches was an impassioned plea at UNCTAD in Geneva for a new deal for the primary producing states of the Third World. He would certainly have been disconcerted to see the third world solidarity he helped to bring about mainly benefiting oil sheiks and Brazilian coffee barons, not the suffering mass of peasants and workers. When Che left Cuba he guaranteed the victory of the ideas he had championed in the economic debate: but in practice the 'moral' incentives he advocated, embodied in the campaign for a 10m.-ton sugar harvest, undermined the economic planning which he had also urged. In Latin America the circumstances of his death produced a surge of sympathy for his ideas which swept a radicalised wing of the Bolivian military into power and helped to install his friend Salvador Allende in the Moneda Palace.

But Guevara's legacy could not give adequate guidance to the peasant and worker delegates of the Popular Assembly convened in La Paz in 1971, nor to the militants of the Popular Unity and MTR in Chile. Virtue plus guns, armed social justice are necessary, but not sufficient, conditions for a successful revolution.

The most powerful testimony to Guevara's continuing significance is that units trained by him – both Cuban and African – helped to drive the white columns out of Angola: but the liberation of Southern Africa will have to find its way through a political maze, involving both the internal disarray and division of the liberation forces and the diplomacy of the great powers.

Che was adopted by millions as paladin of *les damnés de la terre*, a Don Quixote of revolution, a Garibaldi of the 20th century. He helped to restore the moral credentials of revolutionary socialism and to make internationalism something more than a pious phrase. In this sense he was an enormously influential figure, the inspiration of a new political generation in the advanced coun-

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The first of a new series on Magazines
John Mortimer on 'Playboy'
University Forum
Richard Hoggart
on the
Gould Report on Marxist Teaching

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tries as well as in the Third World. Yet many who thought they understood him lost their way. The intense subjectivity, 'the profound love', to which he appealed could lead to mysticism or violence with no social or emancipatory content. Guevara, who urged that captured enemy soldiers should be set free, could be taken as patron saint by a hi-jacker who had never read a line he had written.

The crucial debates of contemporary Marxism concern political issues with which Che did not concern himself. Thus he deplored the virulent antagonism between China and the Soviet Union, but did not seek to explain it. He was troubled by the moral atmosphere of Khrushchev's Russia, but did not doubt that it was becoming freer and more prosperous. He predicted that socialism and revolution would return to the advanced countries, but did not explore the path of class struggle in a bourgeois democracy. Marxist discussion today – whether the topic is the nature of the Soviet Union, the prospects for the Union of the Left or even the objectives of the revolutionary movement in Latin America – is still conducted in terms taken from a previous generation of Marxists: Lenin and Trotsky, Gramsci and Luxemburg, even Karl Kautsky, though this is not so often acknowledged. No doubt fundamentally new problems will need fundamentally new answers. In the search for them, moral imperatives alone will not be enough and a critical evaluation of the classical political discourse of Marxism will be inescapable. For this reason the work of Isaac Deutscher, who died a few weeks before Guevara, is likely to be as valuable an influence as the example of the Argentinian revolutionary.

I have sought to indicate the limitations of Guevara's thought, but in the end it was his life which lent a special lustre to the revolutionary cause. In an age when socialism and revolution sorely needs moral reaffirmation and redefinition he helped to supply it. In a world where chauvinism so often displaces socialism he re-asserted its internationalist vocation. The letter he left for his children expresses this with characteristic terseness: 'Dear Hildita, Aleidita, Camilo, Celia and Ernesto, if one day you read this letter it will be because I am no longer with you. You will almost not remember me and the littlest ones will not remember me at all. Your father has been a man who acts as he thinks and you can be sure that he has been faithful to his convictions. Grow up to be good revolutionaries. Study hard so that you can master the technology that will permit you to control nature. Remember that the Revolution is what matters and that each one of us alone is worth nothing. Above all, always be capable of feeling deeply any injustice committed against anyone anywhere in the world. That is the most beautiful quality of a revolutionary. Farewell, children, I still hope to see you. A big hug and kiss from Papa.'

Murray Sayle

The Rite of Love and Death

The Japanese United Red Army is the result of a long process of political fission and refission, with each new splinter becoming progressively more fanatical, more violent – and in a way, more Japanese. Even before the Dacca hi-jack, this tiny group (maximum active membership, 30) had staged a dazzling series of guerrilla spectaculars round the world, ranging from the attack on the Shell oil refinery in Singaport to the gruesome massacre at Lod airport in Tel Aviv and had three times bent the Japanese Government to its will – a feat never achieved by the majestic Japan Communist Party, with its half-million members, its four million votes, and 38 members in the Japanese Parliament.

If, as Lenin said, the aim of the terrorist is to terrify, then even before Dacca the Red Army with its minute resources was doing well. Meanwhile the peaceable Japanese Left, immensely bigger, is as far from power, or even real political impact, as it was 30 years ago, when the survivors of the illegal pre-war JCP stepped blinking from prison with the immense fund of moral credit won by their steadfast and heroic opposition to the war which had brought Japan to the edge of ruin. There is, of course, a direct connection between the impotence of the Japanese Left which is prepared to respect the forms of democracy, and the deadly efficiency of the young men with guns. But intellectually their lineage is virtually identical, both sides tracing their descent from the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the orthodox Leninist interpretation of Marx.

The fragmentation of the Japanese Left began as long ago as the late 1950s, when the Japan Communist Party began its long march away from the doctrine of armed insurrection and towards parliamentary democracy, friendly persuasion and what has by now become a respectable Japanese version of Eurocommunism. Partly this was an attempt to relieve the Party of the impossible burden of the connection with Russia, Japan's inveterate enemy; and partly a realistic recognition that the immense majority of the Japanese people wanted nothing more to do with bloodshed.

A section of the Japanese student Left refused, however to follow the party elders on the road to respectability. Japanese university students live in squalid lodgings, eat poor food, study in grotesquely overcrowded, ramshackle buildings – in fact represent the nearest thing Japan has to a proletariat. Ahead of them, if they are successful in the examinations, lies a lifetime of devoted service to a Japanese company, a company house, a company hospital and even a company grave.

For those who accept it, the lifestyle of a Japanese 'salaryman' is the comforting and supportive membership of an all-embracing group. For those who rebel, it is one of the most repressive systems to which industrial man has ever been subjected. And, traditionally, university is the time for a young Japanese to get rebellion out of his system.

So the great political struggles which split Japan in the 1960s were conducted almost exclusively by students. Students, still committed in a theoretical way to the violent overthrow of 'imperialism', fought the Japanese police in the streets in 1960 and again in 1970 in opposition to the renewal of the US-Japan Security Treaty; in October 1967 student demonstrations staged a rowdy, 'armed' demonstration against the departure of Prime Minister Sato for Saigon. To be sure, they were 'armed' only with wooden staves, but they could claim at least a tactical propaganda victory, while the 4-million strong Japanese General Council of Trade Unions, many of whose members were working on military procurement contracts for the US army, did nothing.

The students' organisation was a kind of political zoo of dozens of groups and grouplets, differentiated by fine shades of Marxist and neo-Marxist analysis and finding unity only in the riotous atmosphere of street fighting with stones, sticks and primitive Molotov cocktails. Despite the endless appeals to 'student-worker' solidarity, no noticeable number of workers ever joined them, although the search for the mythical Japanese revolutionary proletariat was still going on last week, when the Dacca group secured the release of a couple of convicted murderers who had listened sympathetically to Red Army men in prison.

The Japanese authorities replied to the student violence of the late 1960s by organising a 20,000-strong force of riot policemen armed with sticks, shields, tear gas and water cannon. The students answered by escalating to iron bars, explosives and eventually guns, the various groups splitting and resplitting into smaller and ever more violent fragments. Finally, in the spring of 1969, an assistant professor at Kyoto university (significantly, the most traditional city in Japan) named Takaya Shiomi announced that the only way in which the Japanese student Left could maintain its revolutionary purity was to intensify armed struggle and win a military victory over the police. The result was the first contingent of the Red Army, originally 300 strong.

But expulsions, beatings and finally executions cut down the numbers of the original Red Army. The killings came to light late in 1971 when the police, mounting an enormous campaign which involved interrogating 300,000 suspects, picked up Tsuneo Mori, chairman of the Central Committee of the United Red Army, and from him learned that 12 members of the URA had been tortured and executed by the other members for ideological deviation and attempting to defect – 12 out of a total membership of 39!

In February 1972, there was a final gunbattle in which five members of the URA came out of a house in the mountains near Tokyo with their hands up after their hideout had been surrounded by an army of

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12,000 policemen. 'They would at least have shown the sincerity of their convictions,' said the *Asahi Shimbun* in a revealing comment, 'if they had died to the last man'.

After the 1972 defeat, the survivors of the URA moved their operation to Beirut in a bizarre alliance (now apparently ended) with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. This move was the result of a contact originally made when a Red Army commando hi-jacked a Japan Airlines plane to Pyongyang in North Korea and there met Dr George Habbash of the PFLP – a movement, like the Japanese one, based on radical university students romantically committed to the propaganda of the deed.

What are we to make of this gory tale? The Red Army in action is clearly a long way from anything Marx ever proposed, or Lenin either – in fact, they are closer in style to the terrorist of the People's Will Movement specifically denounced by Lenin as infantile romantics. But it is only the ideology of the Japanese Red Army which descends, by this tortuous route from Marx. The psychology is Japanese. In the murderous self-destruction of the Red Army, the search for the ultimately pure and sincere which can only be found in death, we can readily recognise the ancient *Samurai* tradition, thinly disguised by the superficial trappings of Marxism. The torture and killings of the Red Army men in the mountains, carried out by their own comrades, was a group form of what the Japanese call *Seppuku*, contemptuously referred to by ordinary non-military Japanese as *Hara-Kiri*.

But *Hara-Kiri* is only one form of violent death which, according to the ancient code of the Japanese warrior, the *Samurai* must choose when a choice of life or death presents itself. Even more honourable is *Kirijini*, to die sword in hand, charging a powerful enemy in full knowledge that you will be overwhelmed. Which is exactly the pledge which the Red Army exacts from its members, that they will give their lives, unflinchingly, for the cause.

This is why the Japanese Government caved in so rapidly, it seemed so cravenly, when confronted by the terrorists' threat that they would kill their hostages, starting with an American banker. Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda is not only a Japanese, but of *Samurai* descent himself; better than anyone, he knew that his fanatical compatriots meant business, that in fact they are looking for a chance to die sword, gun or grenade in hand.

The idea that men can only find spiritual purity and comradeship in violent, painful death is abhorrent to Westerners. It is abhorrent, too, to all but a handful of Japanese; but it lies undeniably close to the roots of the unique Japanese experience, and the more gifted and intelligent among them are all the more likely to feel the tug of what the writer Yukio Mishima (dead by *Hara-Kiri* in 1970) called 'the primitive and fanatic Japanese spirit'.

Tokyo

Alexander Cockburn

Fiddler on the Roof

In contemplating the momentous battle in Washington during the last few days over what one Senator described as 'one of the greatest rip-offs in American history' we would do well to recall a charming little piece of sociology noted by Robert Louis Stevenson in *The Amateur Emigrant*. He was informed of it as he travelled, steerage class from Glasgow to New York:

> A man fell from a housetop in the city of Aberdeen, and was brought into hospital with broken bones. He was asked what was his trade, and replied that he was a tapper. It appeared that when a party of slaters were engaged upon a roof, they would now and then be taken with a fancy for the public house. But if these fellows adjourned, the tapping of the mallets would cease, and thus the neighbourhood be advertised of their defection. Hence the career of the tapper. He has to do the tapping and keep up an industrious bustle on the housetop during the absence of the slaters. When he taps for only an hour or two, the thing is child's-play, but when he has to represent a whole troop, it is then that he earns his money in the sweat of his brow. Then must he bound from spot to spot, reduplicate, triplicate, sexduplicate his single personality, and swell and hasten his blows, until he produce a perfect illusion for the ear, and you would swear that a crowd of emulous masons were continuing merrily to roof the house.

Back in the early summer President Carter – who has a good deal of the tapper in him, along with grander pretensions actually to manipulate pieces of slate – proclaimed the 'moral equivalent of war' and vowed to diminish Americans' suicidal over-consumption of energy and lead them to paths of frugality and conservation. Most of his fellow-citizens were, of course, down at the pub, carousing and carefree. In 1973, at the time of the first hikes in the price of oil and of Nixon's energy crusade, the US was importing about 30 per cent of its oil. This year well over 40 per cent of the country's oil comes from abroad. A large amount of it comes from the Arab OPEC countries. Dominating headlines in business papers this week is the announcement by the Commerce Department that the US trade deficit for August was $2,700m., the second largest ever. Petroleum imports into the US in the first seven months of this year are running at a $45,000m. annual rate, up 41 per cent from the 1976 level. Most of this money was spent in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, so the bulk of the US deficit is benefiting very few people indeed.

Amid these swollen figures the spirit of conservation and energy reduction in the United States is hard to detect, excepting some minor histrionics – now almost forgotten – to do with turning down thermostats. An OECD study last year of how industrial countries performed in energy conservation after 1973 ranked the United States 17th out of 18, just in front of Switzerland.

With a veritable thunder of tapping President Carter expounded on such lapses at the start of the summer. An enormous Bill was trundled out of the White House, designed to encourage conservation, to stimulate domestic production of oil and natural gas and finally to accelerate the shift in the fuel base of the country from oil to other sources of energy.

We should now concentrate on the second of these ambitions, the stimulation of domestic production of oil and natural gas. Since the 1950s a consuming ambition of the US energy industry has been to remove all controls from the price of their products. On the inter-state markets natural gas (providing a third of America's energy) is controlled in price. Within the various states it is not. The result has been a strike of capital. Time after time the energy industry, based in the South West and dominated by the oil majors, has fought in Congress to end all regulation. Time after time the energy-consuming states, labour unions and consumers' organisations have fought them off, and averted what would be a fiercely regressive tax on the poor. Just how regressive can be shown by the experience of town of Crystal City, Texas, a place inhabited by 8,000 largely Mexican-Americans with an average per capita annual income of $1,600. In Crystal City, buying its supplies intrastate, the price of gas has risen from 36 cents per thousand cubic feet (about three days' consumption for an average family) five years ago, to $2.05 today. As it fought the increases in the courts, the town piled up $800,000 debt to its natural gas supplier. Crystal City has just lost the court battle, cannot pay the bill and has now had its gas cut off. The people are cooking on outdoor grills, and washing in cold water.

Carter's energy plan tried to compromise on decontrol, allowing the price to rise but stopping short of total deregulation. The plan also proposed to redistribute some of the profits from price increases on oil and gas to the consumers. At first, in the evangelical atmosphere following proclamation of the plan, the oil companies said very little. The plan even wended its way through the House of Representatives in something approximating its original form. But the contemptuous attitude of the oil companies and their representatives in Congress to what they perceived as mere 'tappery' by the President emerged last week in its full crudeness in the Senate.

Apart from proclaiming their eagerness to allow all profits to accrue to the energy companies, a majority of the Senators seemed on the verge of voting for absolute deregulation of natural gas prices. They were held off at the end of last week by desperate measures, with two liberal Senators from northern states forcing procedural filibusters and – for the first time in years – all-night sittings. The scene would be familiar to those who have read Ida Tarbell's famous muckraking history of Standard Oil, where she spoke of entering state legislatures only to see their most conspicuous and potent denizens – the oil company lobbyists.

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The descendants of these lobbyists of the 1890s clustered last week in the Capitol, bolstering their weary troops, viz, the Senators, with information and other more practical incentives. The fight is not over, since both Senate and House will have to settle their differences in Conference, but it is plain that the old regulation line (which itself has inched up over the years) will not be held and the taxes attendant on energy independence will not be redistributed with any equity but in a regressive form familiar to the inhabitants of Crystal City.

What of the master tapper amid this seeming debauch of his plan? The President did say he might veto abandoned Congressional attempts at total deregulation but he has been relatively quiet. Perhaps bruised from the Lance débâcle he has, indeed, been mild in the spirit of compromise that gave the energy companies the stomach for their onslaught in the first place. Not unsympathetic to gradual deregulation Carter can, incidentally, pile all blame on the Congress.

But perhaps the oil companies' successes will be hollow. Did not Carter's plan also promote the shift to other energy sources? Yet here again, over the summer, ears began to detect the distinct sound of tapping. At first, particularly with the President's initiatives on terminating the fast-breeder reactor programme and sternly attempting to curb trade in plutonium, environmentalists and consumer representatives were prompted to praise the presidential energy proposals. But with increasing force it has dawned on them that these same proposals envisage the increased production of electricity through hundreds of light-water nuclear reactors.

And here, amid saloon bar accommodations with the oil industry, the tapper may finally have to face the music. The resistance to nuclear power in the States – signalised by the Seabrook occupation of a New Hampshire nuclear plant site last spring – has the makings of a serious mass movement across the country. The Clamshell Alliance, composed of environmentalists and anti-war veterans, organised the Seabrook affair. But there is now an Abalone Alliance on the West coast, a Catfish Alliance in the South East, an Adobe Alliance in the South West. Amid evidence of mounting local police and FBI surveillance they are planning to escalate their struggle against plant construction by more occupations, acts of civil disobedience and beyond. Some of these alliances, animated by students, middle-class professionals, farmers and the like, are even getting some union support.

Their perspectives, in the context of the excessively modest Carter plan now being further castrated in Congress, sound utopian indeed: solar and other sources of self-renewing power as realistic local propositions; onslaughts on the power of the utilities and so forth. But amid all the talk about reform in the habits of the world's most prodigal consumer of energy, no one has really got out of the pub and on to the roof – except these anti-nuclear activists who have plans very different from what conventional presidential and other architects have presently in mind.

New York

Mike Phillips & Lindsay Mackie

Black Stardust

It was like a Hollywood première. The camera tracks slowly up the line of celebrities, closing in at intervals on a bejewelled beauty, cutting to a group of men in dinner jackets emerging from a limousine. As they see the camera, expressions freeze. The guest of honour is wearing an important frown. The others beam expansively. On the screen everyone looks a little more prosperous, a little more handsome and a little happier than they would in real life. That's appropriate, because this is a documentary film being made by three West Indians, Norman Beaton, Sol Raye and Reeay Al.

Norman's name may well be familiar to anyone who watches television. He's the star of *The Fosters*, a comedy programme about a West Indian household in London. Sol Raye is a singer, Reeay Al is a businessman-entrepreneur: and within the context of their activities they are also considerable stars. But that sounds better than it lives. Sol may be a big name to his own audiences, and one of his recent albums sold over a quarter of a million copies, but the latest job he was offered only paid £40 a week. Norman isn't much better off. 'He's a household name,' Sol says, 'but he's not making any money.'

These ambiguities are reflected in the title of the film. They're calling it *The Inside Outsiders*, and it was inspired, Norman says, by the experience of playing the lead in *Black Joy*, one of the two feature films made in Britain this year. *Black Joy* was written by a black playwright, Jamal Ali, and has a black cast, but, as Norman says, it suggests that black life in Britain is a low-life story: pimps, prostitutes, hustlers and pushers.

For most West Indians this is a reflection of the well-worn media image of themselves, and one which is fiercely resented. For Norman it's the outline of a personal dilemma. Apart from classic roles like Ariel, or Aaron the Moor, most of the characters he's played have been comic plebs like Dad in *The Fosters* or failed calypsonians or half-baked 'militants', or all-singing all-dancing coons – caricatures of blacks with which British audiences feel at home. In fact, he's an unusually cultivated actor, switching easily from quoting Giacometti through anecdotes about the Elizabethan theatre to an analysis of colonial policy in the 19th century.

Now he's tired of playing the clown; and tired of the distortion of his own experience he sees on stage and screen. So *The Inside Outsiders* is going to be about a different kind of black man. It's going to be about Lord Pitt. It's going to be about the West Indian shipping firm, Glamcrest. It's going to be about Jo Whitter; and it's going to be about that ultimate black success story, Muhammed Ali. Indeed the centrepiece of the film is a dinner at which Muhammed Ali was the guest of honour, and which took place at the Grosvenor Hotel in August. Tickets £16.50 a head; over half the 700 diners being black.

'The people in the film,' Norman says, 'are there because they are good examples of what a black man can achieve in this society. Our youth need examples of what can be done, and whites need to know that not every black man spends his time rioting in the streets.'

What emerges from the Grosvenor House footage is a sort of roll-call of a potential black middle class. It's a group made up of businessmen like Jo Whitter, musicians like Sol, sportsmen like John Conteh, race relations entrepreneurs like Lord Pitt and Paul Stephenson, club owners like Count Suckle. In their own way they're all thriving successes, and that's how they see themselves.

But Ali must have found the event fairly commonplace. In black America such a dinner and such guests would be distinctly *dèja vu*. In a later part of the film we see a black family sitting out on a lawn, in a back garden somewhere in a prosperous London suburb. Hard to tell just where it is, but in the background we get a glimpse of French windows, expensive furniture behind them. Around the table on the exquisitely cut grass the family and their guests sit, drinks to hand. All that is needed is the kind of caption with which *Ebony* used to underline their pictures of wealthy blacks in the Fifties – Mr and Mrs X on the lawn of their exclusive home, sharing a joke with friends.

What won't be in the film is the sense of pain and rage which surfaces almost immediately Norman and Sol begin to talk about themselves. An interview with an actor or a singer is usually a bland experience, their grasp of other people's reality is for the most part qualified by their sense of belonging to an exclusive club. But it's obvious that Norman, although he's now a familiar British figure through *The Fosters*, feels excluded from the club. 'There are only a few parts for black actors – *A Taste of Honey* was an accident that provided a generation of black actors with jobs as Sailor Boy – so if another actor wants a part I want, he'll have to destroy me to get it. I've stayed the course where a lot of people would have dropped out.' Norman's conversation is studded with references to friends and relatives who didn't 'stay the course'.

Viewed in this light the film promotes an elaborate piece of fakery, because its images of success are based on people whose careers teeter uncertainly on the edge of extinction. It's an uneasy masquerade of reality which actually fools nobody. 'We're only classified,' says Sol, 'as people who can run little clubs – Count Suckle has got the Q club, and that's where it ends for Count Suckle.'

On the other hand, the film makers believe that this is a necessary and inevitable piece of propaganda. Their perception is that they live in a society where racial equality demands the emergence of a black bourgeoisie which can compete economically with its white counterpart. They see *Inside-Outsiders* as the beginning of a process which will end in [illegible] group.

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Profile: Margaret Thatcher

Piety and Iron

The story of Margaret Thatcher's evolution is not one to set the blood racing. Its milestones are familiar enough: the modest childhood in Grantham, the decent and religious family life, the 'extras' like Latin and elocution which smoothed the way to Oxford. Then the charming, mature courtship of Denis, the neat arrival of twins, the law practice and the safe suburban seat. Apart from one quite good little Private Member's Bill (on the admission of reporters to local council sessions) there was not one original speech or distinctive vote to be recorded in her entire political career until 1970. She was then what she is now – a woman of unusual determination and firm principles with an unflinching and instinctive reactionary cast of mind. She is still at her best when she relies on this and avoids clothing the skeleton with ideological flesh. In a recent conversation on the virtues of individualism she remarked on its ancient origins that they were 'either Hebrew or Greek – I never can remember'. Which is like nothing so much as Mrs Disraeli's confession that she could never recall who came first; the Greeks or the Romans.

There is something very British about the fact that, in the middle of a sex-role revolution, the two most politically influential women in Britain should be Margaret Thatcher and Mary Whitehouse. Thatcher's view of women's liberation is summed up in her crisp reply: 'What's it ever done for me?' Her view of Mrs Whitehouse is that she is a good thing. They are in touch, and it was Mrs Whitehouse who recently briefed her to write to Merlyn Rees about child pornography. The relationship between the two women is not especially close, but it does illustrate two features of the Thatcher makeup, namely her bedrock feeling about religion and the family.

She switched to the Church of England during her engagement to Denis, whether to conform with him or to escape the stern Methodism of her youth is unclear. What is clear is that she makes up for what she lacks in ideology by a visceral commitment to Christianity. Recently one of her female associates was expounding the gravamen of an article she had written for *Encounter*. Thatcher did not disagree with the rather trite positions taken – about individualism, the less government being the best and so forth – but after the woman had left the room she turned to another friend and said: 'Shirley's points are all very well, but without God they are no more than empty stoicism.' In foreign policy speeches – not her strong point despite Russian disapproval and despite the help rendered her by Robert Conquest – she tends to refer to 'Christian civilisation' as if it were a concept readily understood and significant. In a similar, or rather related vein, she has frequent resort to Kipling, her favourite from childhood whose works she collects with a passion. Alistair Maclean for relaxation, but Kipling (and the occasional Solzhenitsyn) for quotation every time.

The family, of course, is basic to her picture of the world. She regards it as the seedbed of thrift and enterprise, as well as the repository of decent standards and the first and last line of defence against collectivism. Few spokesmen have had such an immediate ear-singeing as the luckless Patrick Jenkin received when he proposed a Minister for the Family. She found the idea a clear contradiction in terms, and told him to knock it off. Most of her reactions on moral and social issues are as uncomplicated as that – in the simple-minded fashion of her famous line about 'backing the workers and not the shirkers'. During the stewardship of Roy Jenkins at the Home Office, when the alleged era of compassion was on, she was a down-the-line voter. She was against the abolition of capital punishment – and still favours its restoration for terrorism. She was against legalisation of homosexuality. She opposed the relaxation of divorce law. Oddly, she once voted for a reading of David Steel's bill on abortion (which has led to the old malicious whisper), but now firmly opposes the 'social' provisions of the current law.

In this fashion, she has cleverly been able to steer the Conservative Party away from its traditional hostility to ideology without appearing ideological herself. Where the mentorship of Hayek or Friedman might suggest a 'rigorous' stance against public expenditure, against 'welfare confiscation', or against interventionist policy on prices and incomes, she has arrived at symmetrical conclusions by reference to the old saws and nostrums about rewards for effort, and sees no problems about confronting egalitarianism with the blindingly obvious argument that some people are more deserving than others.

In a recent essay her adviser Patrick

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Cosgrave mused that: 'The modern Conservative Party, because of the fundamental policy decisions it made after 1945, is peculiarly vulnerable to accusations of heartlessness.' It certainly is. Mrs Thatcher hopes to get over this problem by the use of a sensitive image. As the memory of the 'milk-snatcher' fades, she has started to discover a talent in herself for getting on with the voters. In fact, with the calculated softening of her vowels has come a real facility for unbending. It works jolly well with women - and best of all with women of the working class. She was delighted to find, in the private polls taken after the Workington by-election, that most of the straight-switch Labour to Tory voters were women. Psephologically, the tendency of working-class women to vote in secret against their husbands is her secret weapon. She will do better playing on that than she will with bizarre and empty statements like the mini-climax of her Zurich speech, where she averred. 'It is noteworthy that the Victorian era – the heyday of free enterprise in Britain – was also the era of the rise of selflessness and benefaction.' There are some cats best left in the bag.

A Bad Picker

In his essay *Individualism True and False*, Professor Hayek said: 'When in the preparation of this paper I examined some of the standard descriptions of "individualism", I almost began to regret that I had ever connected the ideals in which I believe with a term which has been so abused and so misunderstood.' He spoke, perhaps, more truly than he knew. After a recent exchange on Grunwick in the Commons, a few Tory MPs went to visit the leader and asked her to put the record straight with the lobby. It had rather looked, they said, as if she had ducked Callaghan's invitation to condemn the sacking of workers who simply wanted to join a union. Swift action could correct this impression. 'Why should I?' replied the exponent of personal freedom. 'Well because . . .' persisted her MPs, saying how bad it would look if she didn't. 'But I'm not at all sure that I *do* condemn it' came the reply.

There could well be a useful lesson here. All the fine talk about individual rights, about creativity and enterprise and wealth generation has come to be embodied in the exemplary figure of – George Ward. Mrs Thatcher sees no incongruity here. There is no more of the real libertarian in her than there was in the Margaret Hilda Roberts who couldn't believe, in 1945, that there was any justice in an electorate which rejected Winston Churchill.

For all her flirtation with the NAFF (described as 'good outriders'), Mrs Thatcher does not relish any more Tory splits of the kind that brought her to power. Her referendum suggestion, which she produced without consulting a single member of her shadow cabinet, at least had the merit of shutting up Joseph and Prior. But that sort of problem will not go away for her – and she aggravates it by her main political fault, which is that she is a very bad picker. There have been various illustrations of this – the temporary resuscitation of Reginald Maudling, for instance. Various nonentities have been exalted – chief among them the stuffed-shirt John Davies as invisible spokesman on foreign affairs. Then there is the Stevas-Boyson pantomime horse in the field of education, the 'security-conscious' Airey Neave for Ulster and many more. Mr Maudling's own account of his disinterment is instructive. 'She said "Reggie, would you like to join us again?" and I said "I'd love to, my dear".' Admittedly he had some claim to the title of wealth creator.

Traditional Standards

In fairness, she can only work with the material bequeathed to her by Heath. A quota of placemen and failures is to be expected. Her experience in that cabinet is still the dominant influence on her approach to the problem of power. She believes – as what ambitious politician does not believe? – that it will take two terms for the full Conservative remoulding of the country to come about. But she also believes – in bold contrast to Heath or Macmillan – in a 'first 100 days' strategy. She is haunted by the memory of the early Heath days, when as she sees it the expansion of domestic credit by the Bank of England meant that the Tories lost control of expenditure from the first. 'From then on we were on the treadmill' she says. In her opinion it will be necessary to strike swiftly as soon as office is here. She recalls with pride that, on her appointment as Education Minister, she cancelled Labour's long-standing circular on comprehensivation within 24 hours. At present, she is eagerly watching the fortunes of Malcolm Fraser's anti-socialist crusade in Australia – an experiment which at the time of writing looks like foundering with all hands. She does not intend to go the same way.

She is therefore (and this cannot come naturally to a Conservative) aware of the acute and dangerous pressures to be 'respectable' and *ergo* social-democratic. She holds for the moment to the view that, however painful the Tory remedy will be, it is as nothing compared to the agony of staying on the same course. It has been 'understood' by her immediate circle that this means an *immediate* cut of £5,000m. in the public sector borrowing requirement. There will, presumably, be quite some discussion as to who is going to pay for that.

At least Mrs Thatcher will have one advantage which social democrats engaged in such policies of cutback do not. She really thinks it will increase freedom if the size of the public sector is reduced. It will, actually, be good for us. At the age of nine she won a school prize. 'Aren't you lucky, Margaret', said the headmistress. 'I wasn't lucky – I deserved it' came the piping but firm reply. She thinks not only that we deserve what Robert Lowell once called the 'reign of piety and iron', but that we should be grateful as well. Infirm of purpose she is not.

It seems probable that an excess of reflective capacity does not sit well with a determination to change things and be seen to be in charge. Margaret Thatcher does not suffer from an excess of reflective capacity. A cluster of certainties forms her outlook. In morality – traditional standards as formed by church, family and proper school. In economics – the wisdom of the 'invisible hand'. In domestic affairs – the sway of authority and patriotism. In foreign affairs – a marked and dismal tendency to see the world in strategic terms rather than political ones. In the matter of devolution – a firm and refreshingly unhistorical allegiance to the Union. In everything else – common sense and no nonsense.

All-Consuming Fear

She has one all-consuming fear. It is that another brand of conservatism, the cunning and slothful variety practised by Callaghan, Healey and Foot, will ultimately pre-empt her own more aggressive and uncomfortable style. It is as if the spirit of Baldwin had been revived to fend off the spirit of – who? Mosley? Churchill? Leo Amery? Or perhaps a bit of all three. If she loses she can hope for little mercy from her party, and might not even ask for it. This must account for some of the shrillness of her manner and delivery, her impatience with the press, her intolerance of the unrepentant Heath types who so wetly dropped the ball last time.

Certain themes and ideas – Hayek's *Road to Serfdom*, Churchill's attitude to patriotism, Thorneycroft's attitude to public spending – have been out of style so long (and for such good reason) that it is possible to present them as novel and refreshing to a new generation. Hence Sir Keith Joseph's success with students, and the vogue among journalists and intellectuals for books like *The Future that Doesn't Work*. This coincides with the erosion of Labour as a movement, and with a deep-going middle-class resentment. Mrs Thatcher invited Thorneycroft as her first and favourite speaker in the Oxford University Conservative Association as long ago as 1945. Here is what Edmund Wilson observed about the Britain of that year: 'Basic English qualities . . . the passion for social privilege, the rapacious appetite for property, the egoism that damns one's neighbour, the dependence on inherited advantages, and the almost equally deep-fibred instinct, often not deliberate or conscious, *to make all these appear forms of virtue.*' [Italics added.]

There is the key, or something very like it. Margaret Thatcher tells the middle and prosperous classes that there is no need to be uneasy about their prejudice or privilege. She does so with all the conviction of a clever but narrow-minded person who can see little radically wrong with a system which has allowed her to succeed. In March 1977 her hour certainly seemed to have arrived: now for the next 12 months, possibly even two years, she faces having to live with the prospect of seeing the sand seep through what has always been as much a personal as a political hour-glass.

NEW STATESMAN INDEX
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Brighton Diary

☐ 'Point of order!' . . . 'I move the reference back' . . . 'Card vote!' . . . Once again the cries of ritual combat resound in the conference arena. Rival strengths were tested early on Monday morning, over a procedural issue too intricate (that's traditional too) to be briefly explained, but in essence over the toughness or otherwise of the decision about reselection of MPs. I watched the great majority of constituency party delegates raising their hands to rebuke the platform, and then the trade union bloc voting to uphold it. The card vote followed. Defeat for the impatient Left by 5 million to 1 million. And so it went on, every time there was a contest. The anti-Government alliance of the constituencies and the union chieftains, cause of so many cries of triumph and woe in recent years, was visibly melting like snow in Sussex. For those who remember the days when all good radicals railed against the block vote, it was like old times.

☐ Old times . . . can it be 20 years since the Brighton conference of 1957, when Nye Bevan made his peace with Hugh Gaitskell and agreed to speak for the platform against unilateral renunciation of the H-bomb? For me it's all a vivid memory: the impassioned scenes in the Grand Hotel (whose barmen, I'm happy to report, still solace the anguished as equably as ever); the inexorable approach of what had to be a wretched debate; the electrifying intervention of Frank Cousins, new boss of the TGWU whose politics were still a matter of rumour; and the final agony of Nye's stumbling, petulant speech – doubtless the worst in his life – in which he hung round his neck such phrases as 'emotional spasm' and 'naked into the conference chamber'. For almost all men in political life, I suppose, there comes a time of weariness with everlasting protest and minority campaigning. I remember a distressed Jennie Lee saying to me: 'Try and remember – Nye is nearly 60.' Yes, it really was 20 years ago, and if Nye had lived we'd now be preparing to celebrate his 80th birthday. I like to think that he wouldn't have been Lord Tredegar.

☐ I can swallow my dose of clichés, especially in conference week, but I could scarcely credit a 20-minute speech which included all the following: 'fundamental social change', 'setting a new course', 'in the frontline', 'realise the potential that we have', 'an even more important threshold', 'locked in struggle', 'gladiatorial combats', 'I am candid with you', 'strength of a united movement', 'vital connecting link', 'stand on all these bridges, fight all these battles'. The dispenser was Tony Benn, the occasion a meeting organised by the Labour Parliamentary Association. Earlier in the day, in a 15-minute speech to conference, Benn had given us 'higher moral values', 'effort of mind and will', 'harness the efforts', 'we know in our hearts', and 'fair shares for all'. The LPA meeting was a remarkable affair – if I were in the cliché stakes, I'd say 'perhaps a historic event'. The large room in the Metropole Hotel was packed. The chairman, Bernard Kissen, told us that he is a prospective candidate, he naturally hopes to be an MP, and he therefore looks forward to 'sharing in the privilege of electing Tony Benn as the next leader of our party'. Stormy ovation, as they used to say in Moscow. Benn's speech bore little relation to the advertised subject of the meeting, 'The Socialist Alternative', but contained (as well as the clichés) an endorsement of all the currently popular attitudes you could call to mind and regular neat cues for applause. I had intended to hear the other speeches, but tottered to the bar bemused by the earliest launching of a nomination campaign that I can recall.

☐ Reselection is the main talking-point at this distinctly flat conference, so it's a pity that the debate – on a matter of obvious public interest – is being held in private session. In fact, this conference features two private sessions instead of the customary one. Ron Hayward told me that he sees no justification for private sessions at all, except when an individual is appealing against disciplinary action. Otherwise, he says, they're 'a bit idiotic' and he hopes that they will be abolished before long. Good news.

☐ Among the countless sheets of paper pressed on delegates was the broadsheet of the Campaign for Labour Victory. This included a plug for Dr Dickson Mabon, a candidate for the National Executive (in the event, the constituencies gave him a slender 51,000 votes). The summary of his career began by describing him as 'a miner'. Well, yes; during the war the machinery of conscription sent him to the pits as what was then called a 'Bevin boy'. When he entered Parliament, the standard reference book described him as 'a physician and journalist' and said nothing about a mining background. The broadsheet goes on to assert that Mabon 'went to night school to qualify as a doctor', which would be a notable feat. The same reference book tells us that he studied at Glasgow University. And why on earth not? It's intriguing that proletarian snobbery has become the trademark of the Right wing of the Labour Party.

☐ Sometimes, amid the exchange of gossip and the betting on the National Executive contests, one is brought up short by a reminder that there's a less cosy world outside. Among the listeners at Brighton was our comrade B. P. Koirala, who treads the stony path of being a socialist under the medieval rule of the King of Nepal. In 1959, during a brief democratic interlude, he won the only election ever held in Nepal and became Prime Minister. Absolute royal power was soon installed and he was in prison without trial for eight years. Released, he took refuge in India but decided in 1976 to return home; he was arrested, charged with treason, and made to face a secret trial before a *one-man* tribunal. The judge, weirdly enough, is the former Communist mayor of Katmandu, who has come to terms with the King. After the trial got under way, Koirala collapsed with a blocked neck artery. The King, not wishing to have a mysterious death on his hands, sent Koirala to have an operation in America but made him promise to return. And Koirala will return this month, though it's arguable that he isn't morally obliged to do so and I'm fairly sure that I shouldn't have the courage. He says that he owes it to 300 other arrested comrades. He is 65 years old, doesn't look fully recovered, and talks in a hoarse whisper. He faces a death penalty. We have a lot to think about – South Africa, Chile, Czechoslovakia – but I hope we'll remember to ask what happens to this brave man.

☐ Not exactly relevant to the debate on prices, but nonetheless interesting, was a short lecture on the quality of bread by the delegate from the Scottish Union of Bakers. It did occur to me during the recent strike that one reason for the immediate shortage and the consequent panic is that modern bread is stale when it's a day, or at most two days, old. Home-baked bread, and some bread from small independent bakers, can be eaten for ten days or so, and you feel that you're eating something real. 'This generation', said the Scottish baker sadly, 'doesn't know what good, nutritious bread is.' I shan't forget his description of the mass-production article as 'water standing up'.

☐ Metaphor of the week, from the Liverpool (Walton) delegate: 'They are injecting morphine into the veins of capitalism to try and revive it and give it a new lease of life.'

☐ Saddest remark of the week: 'They don't even invite me to the conference rally now that I've become a peer.' The peer, however, was repining needlessly. The rally, for many years a Sunday evening tradition, is no longer held nowadays.

Mervyn Jones

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Mr Richard Body, Conservative MP for Boston with Holland, has received a grade C pass at O level in English literature after taking the examination in response to criticism of educational standards in his constituency. He said the questions were set out quite clearly, so that short cuts could not be taken. 'My impression is that standards have not dropped and parents have not got too much to worry about.' – *The Times* (Frankie Leung)

☐ Would any elderly/wealthy person(s) wish to become active and interested godmother/father in exchange for providing funds for formal education Trust for 2 young UK thoroughbred boys of exceptional intelligence and potential? Hopeless tax situation would otherwise compel responsible and fervently patriotic parents to emigrate to fund. – small ad in *The Times* (Jeanne Jones)

☐ Hanging is OK. It is favoured by more than half. Laziness is out. Three in four said the unemployed could find jobs if they wanted to. Research director Anne Wicks said: 'Our survey shows kids are more normal than we tend to think these days. They've got a nice balanced view of the world.' – *Daily Mirror* (K. Wyke)

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Corinna Adam

House of Dogs

When Mrs Julie Sterman decided to move in with her estranged husband, she announced her arrival by chucking a dustbin through the glass panes in the front door. From her point of view, this seemed perfectly reasonable. After all, her husband had locked the door against her – how else was she supposed to get in?

That was in April. At first, the neighbours were only moderately taken aback. You do not spend your life in South London (or any other part of a major city, come to that) without expecting to come across the odd fight, the occasional eccentric. But what started to happen in Blashford Street in Lewisham was something exceptional: and due to various legal anomalies, to mistakes, incompetence and sheer bad luck, there seems to be nothing anyone can do about it. No one is directly responsible for the Stermans; no one is answerable to their long-suffering neighbours.

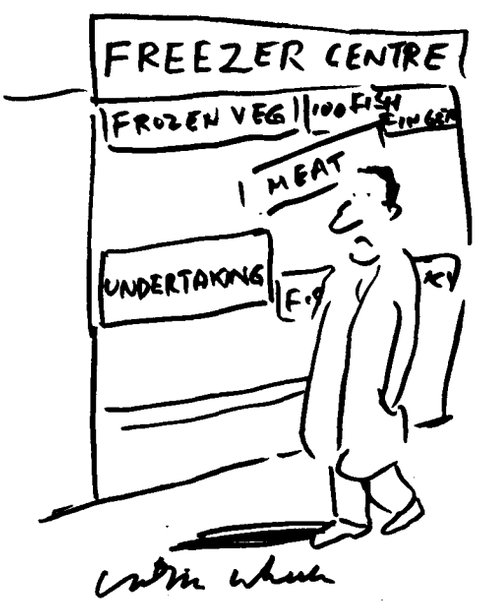
No 6 Blashford Street is a small, two-storey Edwardian house in a terrace, with a patch of ground at the back. It is owned by the Family Housing Association, a Catholic-based operation with some 3,000 tenants – the fifth largest housing association in London. Last November, they let the top, two-room flat to Mr Dennis Sterman, a 53-year-old 'self-employed carpenter'. Mr Sterman told them he was separated from his wife. 'Which is not,' as the Housing Association points out somewhat defensively 'a sin. It would be very odd if we *couldn't* rehouse people who were being evicted from other properties because their marriage was breaking up.'

Mr Sterman was never particularly popular with his neighbours. He kept himself to himself, except for an irritating penchant for collecting stray cats. At one time he was housing about a dozen (it has never been exactly proved how many) and they stank. Nor were his neighbours best pleased when he began constructing little wooden cages for them, to balance on his window-sills so that the cats got fresh air – particularly since he tended to build these cages at any time up to two or three in the morning, and the walls in Blashford Street are thin. He also seemed to be doing professional carpentry in the flat, which was illegal as well as noisy.

But it was when Mrs Sterman arrived that the neighbours began to feel they were living on top of someone else's private nightmare, and that the nightmare was spilling over into their lives. Mrs Sterman combines a quick temper with a passionate love of dogs. Soon after she arrived there were a dozen or so dogs in the little flat, too. And while nothing is reported about the cats and dogs fighting (they seem to have been kept in separate rooms) there is plenty of talk about the Stermans' quarrels. There are even tape-recordings of them, which the neighbours sit over in remembered horror, pointing out 'the worst bits', though in fact to an outsider it sounds fairly unspecific, a cacophony of abusive noises. Not that that makes the idea of living next to it, or under it, tolerable in any way.

It has certainly proved intolerable for the Stermans' closest neighbour, an Irish handyman named George McVitty, who has the flat underneath. It is a double blow for him, since he was living in the ground-floor flat at No 6 before the Stermans moved in, hoping to make some kind of life for his wife and small daughter. His wife and child have now moved out and are 'somewhere in North London: Mr McVitty blames it all on their housing conditions. But then, as the Housing Association sadly points out, people blame *everything* on their housing conditions, when they may easily be just as unhappy if they are moved. Which may be a general truth, but doesn't do much to help the inhabitants of Blashford Street.

The people directly next door, for instance, Dennis and Pat Osborne, describe themselves in conversation as 'simple people'. But one feels this is only because all their efforts to get what they see as justice have failed, for what they consider baffling reasons. Dennis Osborne is a 45-year-old printer; his wife Pat a pretty, competent child-minder. It's hard to believe that she has a grown daughter – but, according to the Osbornes, that very grown daughter had to be protected against threats from the Stermans to disrupt her wedding day this summer. Mrs Osborne has been near to a nervous breakdown; her youngest daughter has had trouble at school 'because she couldn't concentrate, she kept thinking she was hearing the noises from next door again'. The Osbornes themselves have both been summonsed by the Stermans, alleging various offences from assault to damage to property to noise. So has their neighbour Mr John Hutson, an electrician who lives two doors away from the Stermans and who



once physically removed Mrs Sterman from his garden.

For another thing about the Stermans is that they are both articulate in a particular way – 'well-spoken' is the word most often used – and given to litigation. Their neighbours had hoped it would all be over in August, when the Family Housing Association obtained a possession order against Mr Sterman. (He is still the tenant, though Mrs Sterman at one point tried to sue the Housing Association, under the Sex Descrimination Act, for giving him the tenancy in the first place). The possession order was given on the grounds that all those animals were being kept without permission and that the flat was being used as business premises. But in September Mr Sterman ('He writes a good letter,' says a lady from the Housing Association wryly) got an extension of 21 days, saying that he had disposed of a lot of cats and dogs, and was not working but drawing social security. When that three weeks is up, in about ten days' time, they expect him to apply again.

Mr Sterman could only dare to dispose of the dogs, it seems, because Mrs Sterman is now in jail. (He has, though, kept at least three of the cats, probably more.) Julie Sterman has been in Holloway for a fortnight, under a three-month sentence for breaking and entering into a flat in Streatham where she had some idea of squatting. For half-a-dozen years at least, she has had a notorious reputation in South London: the pair of them have been evicted from half-a-dozen properties, and she has won a depressing fame as the 'House of Dogs' woman in the local papers. For 20 years or more, she and her husband have sporadically broken up and lived together again, occasionally being tolerant towards each other's pets, more often conducting mutual abuse to the effect that '*you* don't keep *your* "children" in a fit state'. The neighbours in Blashford Street are understandably nervous about what will happen when Mrs Sterman comes out of prison, and finds her 'children' have been sent off to the Battersea Dogs' Home, or given away.

Earlier this summer, Mr McVitty – the man downstairs – approached the Citizens' Advice Bureau, the Local Legal Aid Centre, the Housing Association, the 'Welfare', even the nuns at the convent where he works as a handyman, for advice: and no one could help him. Earlier this summer, Dennis and Pat Osborne – the couple next door – also went to two different solicitors, one recommended by Dennis's union, Natsopa, and were blithely told that it might be better if they sold up and moved somewhere else. Everyone has told them that their only resort is to a private summons – and at the same time has advised against it, as being too expensive and too much of an emotional drama. The Housing Association is upset, because evicting people is against their principles. The local council just might manage to find another flat – but there is a strong chance the Stermans would turn it down. In which case, everyone waits. Until there is a serious assault, by one of the parties concerned. Until there is yet another suicide attempt. Or until Mr and Mrs Sterman become old-age pensioners, and the state finally has to take responsibility for them. A dozen years to go.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Such an Ordinary Person

One Spring day about 12 years ago I was approaching, as so often and so happily, the august and pleasing Piccadilly backwater of sets of chambers called Albany, invited to have lunch there with a kind friend. April showers were about and while I was crossing the courtyard a few drops of rain fell. Suddenly, as I got to the steps that lead up into the building, a bright vision appeared at the top of them, alone and splendidly perched up and visible, as though on a stage. Was she wearing pale lemon, or was it light grey and pink? Whatever it was, it caught, with the sweeping hat and white gloves, the eye. There was no mistaking the heavy, somewhat lop-sided face, the vast eyelids and the slightly petulant mouth of Dame Edith Evans. She then spoke, I suppose to an Albany porter hidden somewhere behind her, but it might have been London itself that she was addressing. 'I had thought of going out,' she said, 'but now I'm not so sure.' She made the very most of the sentence, giving the first six words a note of bright expectancy, and providing regret and disappointment for the last six. The phrases seemed to go on and hang suspended in the air for quite a time and there was what Enid Bagnold has described as 'a sort of silvery caress on a word here and there'. She hovered and she dithered and eventually she braved the raindrops, a modern Lady Bracknell off to snap up a few goodies at Fortnum's.

England and Turkey are, I suspect, the only countries where we admire our actresses more and more the older they become. Even with those gifted performers who sing and dance it has always been the same story – a gallant pressing on, singing away, until the last possible moment. Nobody thought it in any way odd that Miss Evans should tackle, so to speak, Rosalind at the age of 49, or Cleopatra at 58, though the latter performance did not find universal favour. A black American member of the cast, after watching her rehearse for some days, suddenly spoke his mind: 'Dat ole lady's goin' to lose us a lot of money.' He proved, alas, to be right on this occasion, but managements as a whole had, from the start of her blazing career, little cause to complain of idle box-offices.

The endless list of successes spanned 60 years – seasons at the Old Vic, her supreme Millament in *The Way of the World*, *Evensong*, *Robert's Wife*, *The Seagull*, dazzlements galore through *Waters of the Moon* to the triumph of *Daphne Laureola*. For all the brilliance and warmth of her acting, there was something strangely forbidding about her and it is therefore delightful to discover from the full and recently published biography how very funny she could be, whether discussing God ('I'm afraid I worry Him a bit') or refusing to play Lady Macbeth ('Don't think much of her') or travelling, either in India ('I went everywhere looking for a phallic symbol and I never saw a phallic anything. They must have disappeared when they saw me coming') or in Russia, where her method of coping with impossible Russian names was to call everybody Popov. She viewed unmoved the naked and tipsy bacchanalia in the film, *La Dolce Vita* ('I don't call *that* much of an orgy'), gave her opinion of stage nudity ('Mystery, that's what the theatre's all about and there's no mystery in a lot of goose-pimples') and cross-questioned the local vicar as to what might be expected in the after-life ('I don't want to meet a lot of unpleasant people like Queen Elizabeth. I'm quite sure she was unpleasant and I don't want to meet her').

'I think I'm such an ordinary person' she said, doubtless believing it for there was a weird mixture of humility and arrogance in her. She was, of course, no such thing and here, to reveal how very unordinary she was, is her own chosen biographer, Bryan Forbes, a loving and widely talented friend whom she bewitched at first sight and whom she instructed, giving him all the available documents and letters and papers, to tell nothing but the truth about her. This, in *Ned's Girl* (her father's friends, seeing her name on theatre posters, nudged each other and said 'That's Ned's girl'), he has faithfully done, and done with a skill and charm that make the book (Elm Tree Books will part with a copy for £5.95) required, and highly enjoyable reading, for all those who love the theatre.

All is fascination – the mixed background of a greatly loved GPO father and a mother who was the daughter of an illiterate cowman, the very skimpy education (she remained, in some ways, a bit of a goose), the spell in a London hat-shop, the evening classes in literature and Shakespeare run by a Miss Massey, who used to take the Streatham Town Hall and arrange public performances by her students. After the meeting there with the famous William Poel (and *he* used to take the Ethical Church, Bayswater), Miss Evans abandoned millinery and, though never in the least stage-struck, wandered on to the professional stage almost by accident ('I think they thought this lump's got something in her'). She had indeed, but it was her custom modestly to attribute her achievements to God, with whom she enjoyed a nice working relationship ('You see, He never let me go on tour'). By not going on tour, she meant that she was never, early on, exposed to the danger of picking up from others cheap theatrical acting tricks. At first, her fellow performers were her equals until she speedily, acting and finding the way ahead with some extraordinary inborn instinct of her own, outstripped them. It mattered not at all that she was not beautiful ('I could *assume* beauty, and did very often. My face took the paint well').

Success was immediate, and with fame came some of the tra-la-la that goes with it – she sat for portraits, judged a fashion competition for corselettes, posed for a *Tatler* photographer on the deck of the *Majestic* alongside George Arliss (they looked, says Mr Forbes, not unlike Ethel le Neve and Dr Crippen) and took part in charitable stage romps and mock trials, in one of which Peggy Ashcroft was sentenced to play Juliet for two years in Wigan with Wallace Beery as Romeo. She did some films, though her real triumphs in the cinema were, directed by her biographer, to come later ('I haven't got a film face. It moves about too much').

The sections that deal with her complex love affair and marriage are tactfully handled and extremely moving. He was Guy Booth, first of all a young ledger clerk in Woollands in Knightsbridge who, after the 1914 war, switched to the oilfields of Venezuela. There were long and painful separations and his letters (hers, alas, have perished) reveal how deep and lasting their love was. Many of them are reproduced here and, knowing how brief their marriage was (Guy died in 1935), they provoke lumps in the throat. There are other letters that one reads a good bit less emotionally, namely those from authors badgering her about this or that play (really, the way they go *on*), in particular the ageing Shaw whining away for years in the hope that she would play *The Millionairess* in London, a very doubtful theatrical treat which Hitler subsequently spared us.

It is altogether a book of great theatrical interest and importance and a model of its kind. A curious fact to tell you. When making my notes on the book before writing this piece, I see that I have nowhere taken the liberty of referring to the main subject of it as 'Edith'. I have put either 'Miss Evans' or 'Dame Edith'. Even in death she is formidable and somewhat unapproachable. 'Ordinary' my foot.

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Letters to the Editor

Figures from the Past

Sir, Nicholas Scott has now been recommended by the Executive Council of Chelsea Conservative Association for adoption as Prospective Parliamentary Candidate at the next general election. As the dust seems to be settling, may I set the record straight by correcting the impression given by parts of James Fenton's article (NS 23 September)? When Fenton tried to contact me a couple of weeks ago, I was still bound by a decision of the Standing Selection Committee that no one would talk to the press.

(1) 'Beale, a right-winger, had sworn from the start that he would be a "thorn in the flesh" to Scott.' I do happen to believe that private enterprise and the market economy are more likely to offer the British people a future of material prosperity and democratic freedom than any form of socialism or state planning. But on many other issues you would probably judge my views to lie in the centre or even on the left of the Tory Party. But for a quirk of history I should even have been a founder member of the originally quite 'left-wing' Bow Group. Moreover, the 'thorn in the flesh' quote came from a personal letter written to a friend in Chelsea when I was working abroad in September 1975 and could have had not the vaguest idea that two years later I should be chairman of Chelsea Conservative Association. At that time I had never even met Nick Scott and the remark was prompted by reports that the Tory Reform Group had 'Jacobite' aims. Paul Johnson set that out quite clearly at the time (NS 3 October 1975).

(2) 'Beale took this to mean' . . . etc. At the time of the January 1977 meeting with Nick Scott, I was still only a vice-chairman of the Association. All Fenton's references to points raised then should be seen in that light. The four-man committee interviewed the MP at the request of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the agenda for the meeting was drawn up by my predecessor as chairman. He quite properly included all serious points raised by different members of the Association, in an attempt to clear the matter up once and for all. Certain matters the then chairman asked me to investigate on his behalf since my office was very much closer to Fleet Street and the City than is his own. But the points were put to Scott and his answers were received by the sub-committee as a whole.

(3) Reactions of members of the F & GP Committee were quite mixed when they heard the report-back of our president, Sir Percy Rugg. It, therefore, seemed prudent to consult each one privately, as Fenton states. The decision to hold meetings of the Standing Selection Committee and the Executive Council in September, to take resolutions on the re-adoption of Nick Scott, was made by the elected officers of the Association last June and in consultation with the MP. One or two other minor inaccuracies in this part of Fenton's article are hardly worth correcting.

If I may be permitted a final reflection, experience in the last two or three weeks has taught me how weak are the defences of the individual against misrepresentation in the press. By the time one corrects a misleading or false report, the damage may be done. And, of course, editors have the last word on what they print. I suppose that libel writs are pretty effective but that is a weapon which should have little place in politics. Complaints to the Press Council are also at best a means of correcting the record after – often long after – the event. Still, like democracy in Churchill's definition, the British press is the worst in the world – except for all the others!

NEVILLE BEALE
Chairman,
Chelsea Conservative Association
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London SW3

Education Priorities

Sir, As one of the 'academic highfliers' mentioned in Peter Wilby's article (NS 16 September), perhaps I could comment on the discussion that has followed it. John Rae (NS 23 September) complains that the education system does not produce hard workers and Michael Tucker (NS 30 September) that childrens' thinking about work is wrong.

I, and perhaps other students working for academic degrees, do not feel that our society offers any values that are worth working for. I work hard at English literature; Dr Rae would prefer me to work hard at engineering. Our society demands of us eight hours work on five days a week, in return for money that can only be wasted. After buying the essentials of life, which I can comfortably do with a student grant, the remaining income can only be used to chase after the middle-class dream world of advertising. For someone like myself, who does not value Habitat furniture, televisions, hi-fi systems and new cars as equal to the waste of 50 per cent of my waking hours, there is nothing to work for.

The only option I have is to enter the education world as a career, an unwilling and unwanted recruit like so may other 'academic highfliers' who reject a materialistic society. The education system has not failed me, but capitalism has.

PETER CALLERY
151 Hunter House Road
Sheffield

Sir, It is all very well for Vincent Hudson (Letters 30 September) to opine that Kent Conservatives on the County Education Committee are not measuring the suitability of parent governors by their own particular political yardstick. His words ring hollowly when considered in the context of recent remarks by Dr Peter Draper, chairman of the Kent County Council's Further Education Committee who is on record as having said that 'in odd cases' it would put the appointment of parent governors in jeopardy if they told a doorstep political canvasser that they voted Labour or were not Tories.

Cllr Hudson's case is not helped, either, by the significant statement made by the leader of the Council, Mr John Grugeon, at the last annual general meeting of the County Conservative Group when he declared that 'we (the Tories) are monitoring the political balance of managers and governors of all our educational establishments'.

As a former Labour member of the Kent County Council who has been dispossessed, since the May elections, of the governorships of two grammar schools and similarly 'sacked' from the managing body of a local primary school, perhaps I may be forgiven for casting some doubts on the political altruism of Cllr Hudson and his Conservative colleagues at County Hall in the matter of appointments to boards of school management in Kent.

DERRICK MOLOCK
44 Foad's Hill
Cliffsend
Ramsgate

Sir, John Rae (NS 23 September) suggests that one good engineer will probably do more for the improvement of society than 20 Hampstead intellectuals pursuing theoretical utopias.

Surely, it depends very much upon the end product of the engineer's labours. If he (or she) is responding to the country's need to earn a living by producing weapons of destruction, whether for 'defence' or for export, then I would respectfully suggest that one of the 20 Hampstead intellectuals would probably do more for the improvement of society than 20 good engineers thus employed.

IVY E. PERRY
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Haydon Wick
Swindon, Wilts.

A Week in Ulster

Sir, So Mervyn Jones has spent a week in Northern Ireland and he thinks he knows the score. His article (NS 23 September) is full of some quite appalling inaccuracies masquerading as fact; the conclusions drawn from some substantiated statistics are misleading; and he puts forward a grossly one-sided view of the province.

Just to put the record straight, the navy-uniformed people searching civilians in Belfast City centre are themselves civilians, employed to carry out this essential task – not police as Mr Jones states. Ironically, if it weren't for the security system there would be a great many more joining the Northern Ireland dole queues. Mr Jones labours the statistics of unemployed Catholics yet never asks himself why this should be the case. The answer lies at least partly in the fact that it is well nigh impossible to keep a typical Catholic family of up to 14 children on any normal wage and so life is often easier and more profitable on social security. The housing conditions in Ulster, as indicated in the article, can be appalling for working class people on each side of 'the divide' but what government could afford to provide adequate housing facilities for such large families?

The suffering in Northern Ireland can never be experienced during one week's sojourn and throughout the entire article there is not a single glimpse of the thousands who have died and been left mutilated in terrorist bombing incidents, most of which have been perpetrated by such 'highly intelligent young men' of the cast of 'Peter O'Neill'. In Northern Ireland the crux of the battle is not politics as Mr Jones naïvely suggests. Rather, the common enemy of all Ulster people is the evil, separatist influence of the Roman Catholic Church, with its stranglehold on the education of the present and, apparently, future generations of the Catholic minority group. If this is allowed to continue all Ireland will continue to be 'a priest-ridden, God-forsaken country'.

JANE WALLACE
Belfast

The West Bank's Bill

Sir, In Naomi Shepherd's article 'Israel's Ill-Fated Gamble' (NS 16 September) she mentioned the unwillingness of the Israelis to 'foot the bill' in the restructuring of the West Bank administrative services as proposed by Prime Minister Menahem Begin, but not yet ratified by the Knesset. The fact of the matter is, until now, the West Bankers' contribution to the revenue has been a mere 5 per cent of the potential total. The Israeli authorities steer clear of pressing for income tax, VAT, etc, and tax evaders have been assiduously left in peace. This means that from 1967 the Israelis themselves have been footing the bill for hospitals, drains, electricity, etc.

The proposed restructured 'equal service'

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would, among other things, introduce an efficient revenue collection and by raising the remaining 95 per cent, the West Bankers might become self-supporting in social amenities. What is interesting though, is the fact that support for West Bank Arabs in health services, educational facilities, sewage systems, road building, etc, has never been an issue in Israel and has been *de facto* part of the responsibility assumed by the Israeli Government in administering these territories.

JANE KRIVINE

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In Defence of Callas

Sir, Just a few lines to express the extremely unpleasant impression caused by the article (NS 23 September) written on the death of Maria Callas. She was a great artist and gave much pleasure to millions of people the world over. Mr Sams's cheap wit does a disservice to the NEW STATESMAN, offends the memory of Maria Callas and leaves the reader puzzled by its superficiality and lack of taste.

The silliness of the phrase 'As a further formative contrast, it (her voice) was classically trained in an Athens academy by a Spanish coloratura'. A contrast with what? Or is it news to Mr Sams that a voice can be classically trained in such an uncivilised place or that Spain could produce an outstanding coloratura soprano? The idiotic phrases 'her unearthly ultra-Violetta radiance' and 'her superb Norma has been acclaimed as supernormal' ought not to have been printed in a serious magazine. Of all the obituaries, editorials and articles which I have read in the international press on the occasion of the death of Maria Callas, yours has the sad distinction of being the most banal and vulgar.

CARLOS A. CASTILLA

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Unsuitable Writer

Sir, Oh dear, oh dear! – not being one much given to writing letters, especially to journals, I feel this must be rectified. Poor Anne Bennett (NS 23 September) – we had it all, didn't we? – the middle-class hang-up, the social envy so poisonous in its insinuations; but has anyone stopped to think about the real plight of poor Eileen?

Her father just dead, now living quite alone, feeling she must crystallise her life into a small kitchen – not at one with any of her neighbours and their bangers, no friend to talk to because 'they're out all the time'. What has Ms Bennett actually done for Eileen? Absolutely nothing. Don't tell me she will visit regularly, it doesn't happen like that; and Ms Bennett will be far too busy butterflying off to her next client. Sadly, perhaps the one she derided most (albeit with no means of reply) may well have been the one person with more insight and greater appreciation of the real problems that beset Eileen!

SHIRLEY CUMPEL

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Tolkien Admirer

Sir, As a Tolkien admirer – albeit one who has not yet read *The Silmarillion* – I know from experience the futility of trying to convert those who cannot be converted. Peter Conrad's review (NS 23 September) shows that he is one. Nevertheless, his statement that 'Tolkien pleases not because he is arcane and outlandish' strikes me as nothing more than an attempt to come up with a 'different' reason for disliking his work (whimsicality having been done to death in this regard), and it is one which the balance of the review arguably contradicts.

For all I know, *The Silmarillion* may be the biggest damp squib in publishing history. As an American, however, I must take exception to Mr Conrad's reference to the 'permanent adolescents of the American university'. It is, quite simply, irrelevant, unless he was writing for an audience that dislikes Americans even more than it does Tolkien.

SUSAN H. LLEWELLYN

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What's in a Name?

Sir, Crucifer (London Diary 30 September) is not alone in his search for non-existent Ever-Ready razor blades. For more than 55 years I have owned two admirable razors which will use only such blades. (For two years they were mailed to me in Hamburg by a friendly London chemist.) All the many chemists and barbers for miles around this area have given the same bland reply as that offered Crucifer. Not wishing to dispose of two efficient razors, I wrote to two Ever-Ready addresses in the London Telephone Directory to obtain official confirmation that the blades were no longer being manufactured. My first letter was returned by the Post Office marked 'Gone Away: No Known Address'; the second sent to the firm's head office has had no reply after three weeks.

Like Crucifer, I am now buying excellent alternative torch and transistor batteries as advertised on TV. Alas, there is no such alternative in razor blades. Perhaps Ever-Ready's service does not live up to what its name implies?

PAUL ROTHA

Chapel Cottage
Moreton Thame
Oxon.

Through a Lens Darkly

Sir, I fear that Crucifer (London Diary 30 September) must have lost his spectacles as well as his Every-Ready razor blade last week.

He says that a 'resounding silence' followed the *Sunday Times*'s suggestion that exclusive pictures of the Seven Sisters Road bank raid published in the *Daily Express* came from official police sources. In fact we published a leader within 48 hours dismissing that suggestion as rubbish, though it is fair to state that some justifiable confusion arose over our efforts to protect the anonymity of the photographer.

DEREK JAMESON
Editor

Daily Express
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Not So Innocent

Sir, Whether or not Maurice Yaffé was suggesting that all corporal punishment of children amounted to indecent assault – and it seems most unlikely – for K. Brown (Letters 30 September) to characterise it as an 'innocent and useful activity' is going to the opposite extreme with a vengeance; and I do not see why the special prevalence of educational flagellation in schools controlled by some Labour-dominated local authorities should be advanced as an object-lesson for readers of the NEW STATESMAN. Supposing politics to have the slightest relevance to such an issue, one can but regret that councillors whose political sympathies ought to incline them towards the humane and progressive should sometimes support the continuance of a barbaric practice unknown in the educational systems of virtually every other European country.

Your correspondent was singularly unfortunate in choosing the North-East of England to illustrate his thesis. Several comprehensive schools in that area admittedly attracted much notoriety last year in this connection, particularly over the beating of adolescent girls. However, the most enthusiastic supporters of this 'activity' were evidently not the responsible education authorities, but the publishers of numerous pornographic magazflines which are devoted to an erotic interest in corporal punishment.

The Portia Trust recently sent some examples of these magazines to the Department of Education and Science; they included articles naming and applauding individual schools controlled by some of Mr Brown's 'Labour-dominated' authorities, and even individual teachers and pupils concerned in incidents involving the flagellation of adolescent girls. 'It is a matter of common report,' conceded the Department's Senior Chief Inspector in her reply, 'that there are forms of sexual perversion which find satisfaction in the thought, administration or experience of corporal punishment. It does not follow, however, that there is such a connection when corporal punishment is used in schools.'

Perhaps so; nor does it follow, though, that it can be dismissed as the 'innocent and useful activity' defended by your correspondent, and the sooner we get rid of it the better for the reputation of British education and the psychological health of our children.

EDWARD BAKER

The Portia Trust
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Confusion Confounded

Sir, The atmosphere of Mittel Europa before the first world war must have been impressive indeed (Tom Paulin, NS 30 September) – all those soldiers in *okapis* marching silently through the cobbled streets of Belgrade. What on earth were they up to? Trooping the Koolah? Bringing the Good Gnus from Ghent to Aix? I can't wait to be told.

RICHARD BRAYSHAW

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The Good Book

Sir, The point of the Old Testament, I would remind Arthur Marshall ('Take a Pew', NS 30 September) is that in spite of the grim catalogue of evil, men were capable also of sublimity.

The call of Abraham, Jacob's dream at Bethel, the majestic psalms of David, Jonathan's devoted friendship, Elijah's response to the 'still small voice', the tenderness of Ruth, the passion for righteousness shown by the great prophets – these are elements that can inspire true devotion in an Old Testament reader. However horrifying the turmoil of the world, the divine spark can always be found.

But above all, Jesus Christ crystallises in Himself all the strivings and moral progress of previous centuries. One commiserates with Mr Marshall for his depressing experience; there is far more value in the Old Testament, however, than he realises.

N. E. KNIGHT

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

David Daiches

Quarrels With Myself

Milton and the English Revolution by CHRISTOPHER HILL *Faber* £12.50

The more we learn about Milton, the more fascinating and paradoxical his character becomes. When I was a student he was presented as the most learned as well as the most craftsmanlike of English poets, so that a proper understanding of his poetry required both classical and biblical erudition. Hebrew, Greek, Latin and Italian appeared to be the minimum linguistic equipment for any proper Miltonist, while a wide-ranging acquaintance with patristic and other Christian theological literature – to say nothing of Cabbalistic and other Jewish sources – as well as a sophistication about the technical problems of handling verse and of structuring both lyrics and narrative poems seemed equally necessary. This was the Milton who embodied all the knowledge of both classical and Renaissance Europe and put it at the service of his poetry.

We knew, of course, that there was also another Milton, the pamphleteer, the political and theological controversialist, the scourge of bishops and defender of regicides, the man who thought that the defeat of Charles I and the establishment of the Commonwealth would mean a brave new world in which 'God's Englishmen' would demonstrate the almost utopian advantages of a true and completed Reformation. And we knew of his disillusion with the course of the Commonwealth government and most of all at the Restoration, and were aware of how this was indirectly reflected in *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*.

We knew, of course, that there was also passionate commitment to the anti-episcopal and anti-royalist cause, was not at all the traditional stereotype of the ascetic Puritan; that he liked music and pretty women and dinner parties with wine and that some of his early poetry (especially in Latin) showed a sensuousness and a sexuality not normally associated with Puritanism. We were also aware that the portrait of the unfallen Eve in *Paradise Lost* throbs with a romantic sexual passion and that the relationship between her and Adam, both before and after the Fall, is presented with a perhaps unconscious ambiguity, calling into question the justice of God's behaviour and so threatening the ostensible purpose of the poem, to justify the ways of God to men. And we were vaguely aware of contradictions between Milton's passionate advocacy of freedom of speech and liberty of preaching for the common man on the one hand, and his contempt for the ignorant, the unlearned, the easily led (and misled) vulgar herd on the other.

Paradoxes enough [illegible] there are more, many more, as Christopher Hill's learned and lively book clearly shows. For Milton, though a profound scholar, was also deeply involved in what Hill calls the 'third culture' of his day, the popular heretical culture distinct equally from the ideas of the court and the established church and the ideas of orthodox Puritanism. Though Milton never committed himself to the beliefs of any one heretical sect – he worked out his own synthesis of Christian thought in a highly individual way – he knew and was influenced in varying degrees by a great variety of popular heretical thought, not all of it present in books, but much of it transmitted and developed by oral discussion, often in taverns. We can see in Milton ideas in common with Ranters, Quakers, Arminians, Anabaptists, Socinians, Levellers, Diggers, Muggletonians, Fifth Monarchy Men, and others: these ideas were social and political as well as theological, and Milton used them in his own way and expressed them in his prose writings with a unique vigour. Few of his views, Hill tells us, were original. But he was wholly original in the use he made of them. 'I believe', Hill writes,

> that Milton's ideas were more directly influenced than is usually recognised by the events of the English Revolution in which he was an active participant; and that the influences brought to bear on him were much more radical than has been accepted.

He places Milton more firmly in his historical context than the late W. R. Parker did, great Milton scholar though Parker was, and in doing so corrects many of Parker's emphases. But although he pays tribute both to Empson's brilliantly heterodox book on Milton and to the 'great Miltonists' from Masson to Wolfe and Kelley, his aim is different from that of any of them: 'I want to look at Milton . . . from the angle of his radical contemporaries'. He wants to redirect 'the vast energy at present devoted to Milton studies . . . away from the Christian Fathers to Milton's contemporaries and immediate successors'. And he regards his book as a first attempt in this direction to be soon superseded 'by more learned and better books'. The modesty is appealing but unnecessary. Those who regard Hill as a tendentious Marxist historian will I think be surprised by the openness, the lively suggestiveness and total lack of dogmatism in this stimulating book.

Hill's suggestions on how we should read Milton's poems are not offered as more than helps to an understanding of the relation between the poet and his environment: he is sensitive enough to the poetic use of language to know that a full reading – if such a thing is possible – requires the use of other insights as well. He 'suggests' that we might read *Comus* and *Lycidas* 'in the light of the growing alienation from Charles I's court of large numbers of English intellectuals (though not only intellectuals)', and provides very good reasons why we should do so. He shows how Milton's battle with censorship both under Laud and after the Restoration drove him to deliberately indirect modes of expression, and that an understanding of how the censorship worked helps us to read the signals that Milton (both in poetry and in prose) often sends secretly across to the reader. He explores Milton's relation with the Radicals and examines the arguments of his prose works in this context. Out of his vast reading in the controversial literature of the period he lists the sects and radical groups that shared some of Milton's radical views – anti-clericalism, millenarianism, antinomianism, anti-Trinitarianism, mortalism, materialism, hell internal – and is surprised to find the group closest to Milton were the Muggletonians. But Milton was not a Muggletonian: if his ideas were not original, his synthesis of them (which kept changing) was. He lived 'in a state of permanent dialogue with radical views which he could not wholly accept, yet some of which greatly attracted him'. We could expect this to be shown (as it is) in discussion of the prose works. It is in his application of it to the poetry that Hill is often most interesting.

He offers not new interpretations but new emphases. In discussing the two epics and *Samson* he tells us that he has

> started from the hypothesis that in all three poems Milton is grappling with problems set by the failure of God's cause in England . . . Awareness of the world in which Milton wrote, and of the audience for whom he wrote, ought to help us to understand not only what his conscious self thought he was doing, but what other more hidden intentions he may have had, which myth and allegory helped him both to realise and to disguise from himself.

He shows how 'Milton needed Arminianism to save God'; for redemption is for all men, not just for a pre-destined elect, provided they use their free will properly. Yet in spite of this 'Milton is no more able than any other theologian to explain how a beneficent omnipotence has been unable to make a better job of running the universe'.

In discussing *Paradise Regained* Hill points out that 'for Milton the Son's successful resistance to temptation is more important than the incarnation, and the crucifixion is merely the last example of his heroic fortitude'. Other commentators have noted this, but none before has linked the point so precisely to Milton's relation with his environment at the time of writing. Hill does not, however, comment on what to me is one of the most extraordinary passages in the poem, when God says to Gabriel ('smiling'):

> He [Satan] now shall know I can
> produce a man
> Of female Seed, far abler to resist
> All his solicitations, and at length
> All his vast force, and drive him
> back to Hell.

This is an extraordinary admission that God failed in designing Man Mark I, that he did not give him a strong enough will, and

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that he would now create (in Jesus) Man Mark II, in which the will would be strong enough to resist Satan. The theological implication of this, and the implication of God's responsibility for the Fall, seem to me to go far beyond any of the Miltonic paradoxes and heresies that Hill discusses.

'Milton never resolved his tensions – between liberty and discipline, passion and reason, human love and God's providence, the necessity of individualism and the necessity of society, radicalism and élitism.' Again: 'Milton found his allegiance divided between the culture of the Protestant ethic and the lower-class third culture; and this may underlie many of the tensions revealed in his writings.' I think that both these statements are true and that Hill has shown us how they came to be true in Milton's life and work. For Milton remains in many ways a self-contradictory, paradoxical, baffling poet, who speaks in many voices simultaneously. It does no service to his memory, nor does it adequately reveal his greatness and his fascination, to impose on his thought and on his poetry a single coherent theology and philosophy, whether orthodox or heretical, Cabbalistic or Puritan, elitist or populist. Yeats said that out of our quarrel with others we make rhetoric while out of our quarrel with ourselves we make poetry. Milton quarrelled both with others and with himself, but his most interesting and characteristic work, in poetry and prose, arose out of his quarrels with himself.

Clive James

In Their Flying Machines

Fighter by LEN DEIGHTON *Cape* £4.95
The Last Chance by JOHANNES STEINHOFF *Hutchinson* £4.75

After *Bomber*, which was mainly about bombers, comes *Fighter*, which is mainly about fighters. Deighton's monomial titles ought not to mislead the reader into thinking that the man who dreams them up is simple-minded. *Bomber* was, and is, an excellent book. It strikes a difficult balance between moral outrage at what men did and enthralled interest in the machines with which they did it. Deighton's bump for advanced technology was already apparent from his spy novels, while even the otherwise unspeakable *Close-Up* was interesting on the nuts and bolts of a film star's career. But *Bomber* was the clearest proof that Deighton possessed an unmatched gift for analysing complex systems. How the RAF went about the sad business of burning Germany by night, and how the Germans tried to stop them doing it, formed an elaborate, interlocking, technology-intensive closed system which nobody before Deighton had ever succeeded in bringing back to life. The sinister poetic force of the original events had not been captured by the official historians, while the full facts were either abridged or distorted in the pop memoirs. Deighton got everything in. I can remember reading the book in a single night, marvelling at the intensity of detail. He even knew what colour flashes the bombs made when they went off. (Like most members of the generation growing up after the war, I had always assumed – because of newsreels – that the bombs had exploded in black and white.)

The weakness of *Bomber* lay in its characters. Deighton invented a representative battle and staffed it with what he fancied were representative types. Actually they weren't as clumsily drawn as you might think. Deighton is not quite as bad at character as the critics say, just as John le Carré is not quite as good. A book like *Yesterday's Spy*, one of Deighton's recent fictions, is not only stronger on action than Le Carré's later work, but features more believable people. The cast-list of *Close-Up* is indeed hopelessly makeshift, but the characters flying around in *Bomber*, though divided up and labelled in what looks like a rough-and-ready way, are deployed with some cunning to bring out the relevant tensions. You could be excused, however, for not connecting them to the real world. In *Fighter* there is no way out of it. The Battle of Britain really happened. Not just the machines, but the people too, really existed. And Deighton has managed to give the whole event a clarity which it lacked even at – especially at – the time.

According to Deighton (and he is very likely right) the Battle of Britain was never won, but there was sufficient reason for triumph in the fact that it was not lost. Dowding's whole effort was to ensure that Fighter Command should survive as a force. He could not realistically hope to destroy the Luftwaffe, but on the other hand he could hope to go on denying it command of the air, thereby rendering invasion impossible. Dowding was a percentage player. He was under relentless pressure – especially from one of his own immediate subordinates, Leigh-Mallory – to gamble his strength in mass actions. He resisted the pressure, guarded his resources, and fought a protracted battle with great patience as well as consummate skill and daring.

Deighton takes the full measure of Dowding's superior mind. As conceived of by Dowding, full-scale warfare in the sky was not just chess, but that version of chess proposed by Brecht, in which the pieces change value according to how long they remain on a given square. Dowding balanced all, brought all to mind. The Germans would probably have beaten him if they had concentrated on attacking his radar stations and airfields. But in failing to do that, they were left in the position of matching their own limited supply of men and machines against his. Dowding understood his limitations better than they understood theirs. He kept his nerve while the stakes mounted. Their nerve cracked first.

Fighter would be valuable if it did nothing more than help correct the popular impression that Leigh-Mallory's 'big wing' theory was a possible alternative to Dowding's penny-packet tactics. The big wing theory was widely publicised after the war in Paul Brickhill's best-selling biography of Douglas Bader, *Reach for the Sky*. Even retrospectively it is an appealing notion, and at the time must have seemed like simple common sense to the pilots of Leigh-Mallory's 12 Group, kept in reserve by Dowding's order until the battle was almost over. Bitterly frustrated, they could be forgiven for thinking that if they swooped *en masse* and shot down a whole raid the Germans would throw in the sponge. But Deighton has the facts and figures to prove that Dowding couldn't take the risk. If his number of trained pilots fell below a certain point, there could be no making up the loss. So he set his face like flint against the rage of his own young heroes. In the long run (or, rather, the disgracefully short run) that was probably one of the things which cost him his job.

Eventually the British staved off defeat because they were better led and organised. The German fighter and bomber formations were well commanded at operational level but the generalship in the higher echelons was suspect and at the very top there was no firm control apart from Goering's caprice. Deighton persuasively analyses the contending systems. He is good on the personalities but is well aware that the impersonal mattered at least as much. Above all, the machines mattered, and on those he is tremendous.

Each type of aircraft is traced through its full history. You are told what they were like to fly. There are diagrams to show how they compared in performance. The Messerschmitt Bf 109 could turn inside the Hurricane, which could turn inside the Spitfire. You will find out why dogfights always moved downwards. There is almost no end to what you will find out: even small boys who thought they were clued-up will be open-mouthed.

Deighton can do all this because he looks upon aircraft as works of art as well as articles to serve a purpose. After the Futurist movement's embarrassing enthusiasm it became unfashionable to take an aesthetic interest in machines, but Deighton is independent enough to respond to them with his whole soul. Among the results is that he is able to set new standards for this type of book. A pity that the printers could not do the same: the typeface is miserable and literals are frequent.

Sub-titled 'The Pilots' Plot Against Goering', Johannes Steinhoff's interesting book is the pop war memoir in its more traditional form, complete with vile editing (B-29s are shown bombing Germany). Apart from the few unquestioningly gung-ho efforts like Rudel's *Stuka Pilot* (in which the fighting was described in terms of how many Russian tanks Rudel could destroy before Hitler grounded him under the weight of increasingly elaborate awards for valour) the German fliers, from Galland on down, have usually been bent on telling us how much they could have achieved if they

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had not been saddled with a Nazi government. They were almost certainly correct. It might have been mere chance that the Allies could come up with leaders like Dowding but with the Germans there was no chance at all. Hitler was too erratic ever to grasp a strategic pattern and Goering simply didn't understand modern aircraft: his mind, like his heart, was still with the Richtofen Circus. The Me 262 jet fighter might not have been able to stop the RAF at night but it could certainly have devastated the US 8th Air Force by day. As we know from the official histories, even with conventional fighters the Luftwaffe made the Schweinfurt raids so expensive that the Americans thought of calling a halt. The jets could have ruled the sky if they had been ready in time. But Hitler's intuitive genius put a stop to that. When they *were* ready, Goering was too far gone to know how to use them. It is doubtful if the pilots ever really hatched much of a 'plot against Goering' but they certainly had every reason to despise him.

As it was, Steinhoff flew Me 262s in some of the last sorties of the war. Too late to effect the picture (which had already been transformed by the P-51 Mustang long-range escort fighter) the jets flew in a world of their own – the future. Steinhoff tells us what they were like to fly. He also tells us what they were like to crash. His face was burned off. There is a portrait of him as he was in 1942, a handsome young ace with the Knight's Cross at his neck. There is also a photo of him taken in 1945, after the bandages were removed. The comparison should help destroy any lingering illusions about the romance of aerial combat.

Paul Theroux

Life With the Lid On

Elizabeth Bowen by VICTORIA GLENDINNING
Weidenfeld £6.50

The photographs on the jacket are interesting. On the front is the posed photograph by Bill Brandt showing Elizabeth Bowen looking weary and intense, seated by a window stroking a book page like a blind woman reading braille. As a photograph it is a work of art; as a portrait it has a shadowy magnificence; as a picture of Elizabeth Bowen it says absolutely nothing. You have to look at the blurred, badly-focused photograph on the back cover for anything downright or approaching the truth – Miss Bowen tramping hard through a meadow, with the sleeves of her cardigan pushed to her elbows, her socks slipping, the glasses she hated masking her eyes, a heavy tweed skirt, bulky things in her hand, and, right behind her, the elegant front of Bowen's Court about to disappear into a vast tree.

It is with Bowen's Court – Elizabeth's ancestral home – that Victoria Glendinning begins her biography. Miss Bowen started her life there, drew inspiration from it, wrote about it as fact in *Bowen's Court* and as fiction in *The Last September*, and she entertained in it; when she made money she improved it, and when she could no longer afford the place she sold it to an Irishman who she hoped would keep it going. She imagined his children scampering about the place. But within a year of its sale, the house was demolished. The Irishman was more interested in land and timber than what Miss Bowen had valued in the house. How could he have known that

> what runs on most through a family living in one place is a continuous semi-physical dream . . . With each death, the air of the place had thickened: it had been added to . . .

But even Elizabeth Bowen had been impatient with it, and there were times when, in London, she would have considered it 'a relief' to see it burnt to the ground.

Miss Glendinning makes much of Bowen's Court, because Elizabeth Bowen did; and she places similar emphasis on the Anglo-Irishness of the Bowens, and how it showed in Elizabeth's 'stylishness and verbal fluency'. The biographer sees Elizabeth as one of a long line of Anglo-Irish writers, and ranks her among Sheridan, George Moore and Wilde. Miss Glendinning, like Miss Bowen, tends to harp on the pedigree, the racial sensibilities, the historical sense, the Irishness in the writer's character. Examined this way, the biographical subject has to struggle out of a mass of attributed and inherited traits to be finally portrayed with any individuality. But it is misleading to take the writer at her own assessment; it is not until Elizabeth Bowen marries that the biographer presents her as a person with a vision, someone capable of describing 'the rising tide of hallucination' in the war-time stories, or the sexual tangles in *The Death of the Heart* and *The Heat of the Day*.

Alan Cameron was a loyal, reliable, dull, intelligent, but not intrusive man: the perfect cuckold. In Miss Glendinning's book he has many more secrets than Elizabeth. We do not know what, if anything, he knew of Elizabeth's infidelities – they were not many, but they were passionate. Miss Glendinning, in two pages of description, summarises one of the affairs; and the allusions and wilful vagueness, the hints at tempestuousness and the suppression of the lover's name are worthy of Miss Bowen herself. Perhaps this is how biography ought to be written: there was a lover; he married; he went away. What remained, and what Miss Bowen found in her imagination, she put into *The House in Paris*.

Combining grace with toughness and what looks to have been real physical and

"If any country deserves the world's compassion and interest it is Cambodia."
Jon Swain in his foreword.

PEACE WITH HORROR

The untold story of Communist genocide in Cambodia

by John Barron and Anthony Paul

"The best study so far of the Cambodian "regeneration." The authors have made a detailed survey of all the evidence there is . . . It may be the best book there ever will be." *The Economist*

Hodder & Stoughton £4.95

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emotional strength, Miss Bowen was hardier and more resolute than most of her contemporaries. She was generous and so had many friends, she was 'formidable' and consequently was closely-watched – but 'formidable' is the word polite admirers use for women who can put down the weak or foolish with one cold remark ('Some people really ought to be left in the car with the dogs'). 'Elizabeth is a saint', said Alan; anyone who has known a guilty drunkard recognises the remark, but it drove Elizabeth out of the room, if not up the wall. She was not a saint, nor was she a sinner. She was not one person and most likely would have despised anyone who thought of her as a well-integrated personality. To have matched wits with Virginia Woolf, treated Cyril Connolly's wheedling with disdain, fallen in love with a Canadian diplomat and gone to bed (it seems; Miss Glendenning is short on details) with the gay American May Sarton, shows courage, a mysterious libido and a capacity for contradiction. And all this time, another life was being lived within her – the surer, secret and contained life of the writer.

She had admired writing of 'life with the lid on', but the war finished that. The change is noticeable in her work, yet even if it was not she remarked on it, stating with her usual frankness that she 'would not have missed being in London throughout the war for anything: it was the most interesting period of my life'. She examined this interest in detail in the preface to the American edition of *Ivy Gripped the Steps*, which contains some of her finest stories. Miss Glendinning does not analyse the stories as thoroughly as Miss Bowen herself did – there is much more life than work in this biography – but she does ample justice to the brilliance and melodrama in *The Heat of the Day*. Virginia Woolf had cautioned her friend against reading too much James, but this novel shows how she ignored the advice and profited by her reading. What are the Anglo-Irish virtues of this novel set in war-time London? None that I can think of. Of course, she could write well about the old homestead, and family loyalties, and she wrote an entire book about the Shelbourne Hotel in Dublin. But she never wrote better than when she was dealing with an exhausting love affair, or the upheaval and dislocation of the war.

And like L. P. Hartley, but not many others, she wrote well of the supernatural. I was a bit sorry that Miss Glendinning had so little to say on this subject. Miss Bowen was fascinated by witchcraft ('Witchcraft: A Query. Is anything uncanny involved in the process of writing?' – a note for an unfinished part of her autobiography). There are ghosts in her stories – 'The Demon Lover' gave me goosebumps – but no ghosts and nothing of the supernatural in her novels. One would like to know why.

She suffered the general depression and suffocations of the postwar years, and with the death of Alan and the disappearance of Bowen's Court she was on the move. She travelled widely on the lecture circuit, and visited any number of American universities; she was restless and responsive, but her great love of America and Americans makes only a brief appearance in her work, in her last and somewhat bewildering novel, *Eva Trout*. It is a pity she did not live long enough to write her autobiography. I think it would have been something like Mark Twain's, full of obsessive excursions and grandiose vulgarity.

Miss Glendinning's book has an authorised feel to it, respectful and shading off into implication when obvious difficulties loom. It has been built up from letters and anecdotes and from Miss Bowen's own writing; but visitors and friends are not always the best judges of character, and too often Miss Glendinning gives these witnesses the last word. In her flashes of deduction, when she is most cold and finds the paradoxes or the posing a bit too much, Miss Glendinning is an able biographer. She seems to have taken the hint from Miss Bowen who, when asked her feelings about death and ageing, said, 'I think the main thing, don't you, is to keep the show on the road.'

Anthony Greenwood

Division Bells

Labour and the Left in the 1930s by BEN PIMLOTT *Cambridge* £6.50

Tribune 40: The First Forty Years of a Socialist Newspaper edited by Douglas Hill *Quartet* £2.50

When Jennie Lee, as chairman of the Labour Executive, presented a cheque to Len Williams on his retirement, she asked him to buy something which would remind him of us all. 'Knives, for example,' interjected Tony Benn. *Knives* could be the title of Ben Pimlott's well-written account of the self-inflicted wounds which Labour sustained in the Thirties – through its inflexibility, and the lack of self-confidence which made it inflexible. It leaves one with feelings of nostalgia for the battles we fought, and of despair at the Labour Party's failure to capitalise effectively on the problems and tragedies of the decade.

The Labour Party did not come very well out of the 1931 crisis. I was at Chequers in August that year, just before the publication of the May Report on the national economy. I mentioned it to Philip Snowden. 'The Report', said Snowden, 'is much, much more serious than the public can possibly imagine.' When the cabinet considered it Snowden's drastic measures were approved by a majority of the ministers and the minority advanced no alternative policy; it was only after the walk-out of eight ministers, led by Arthur Henderson, and including my father, that MacDonald threw in his hand, later to form a National Government.

I agree with Mr Pimlott in thinking that MacDonald believed that the split in Labour's ranks would be only temporary. Certainly both Henderson and Middleton wanted MacDonald to stay in the party. But the general election which MacDonald called after his expulsion made the breach wider and it was never bridged. The long-term consequence was that the party viewed any contact with outsiders – whether with Lloyd-George, Harry Pollitt, or Harold Macmillan – as a mortal threat. What Mr Pimlott calls its 'purist exclusiveness' was noble but sterile. The 1931 result, moreover, might well have made Labour leaders more adventurous about electoral reform. The near-destruction of the Parliamentary Labour Party, which fell from 288 seats to 52, was caused not so much by a drop in support as by an electoral system which normally gives us a government with a minority of the votes. The Proportional Representation Society reported after the 1931 election that PR would have given Labour in 1929 only 225 seats instead of 288, and, in 1931, 168 seats instead of 52. Disillusionment with parliamentary democracy at a time of acute crisis may have encouraged a switch to extra-parliamentary activities, but Mr Pimlott is right to remind us that the Left got minimal support while the Labour Party's membership was steadily growing.

Looking back, one is struck by the extent to which Stafford Cripps remained at the centre of the political turmoil. I liked him very much, but his political experience was severely limited and his swinging from one panacea to another, combined with his oratorical ineptitudes, did him harm. Clem Attlee commented that Stafford's 'instability gives me little trust in his judgment'. A charitable interpretation would be that politicians are often driven into positions more extreme than they intend.

Cripps, anyhow, must have been a difficult political bedfellow and only one member of the NEC voted against his expulsion from the party. And when annual conference turned down his appeal he was backed by only two-fifths of the constituency parties. He was very bitter about this. During the war I called on him in Kuibyshev when he was British Ambassador to the USSR and I asked him when he would be back in the party. He replied very emphatically, 'I shall *never* never go back after the way they treated me.' But he did, and he was an outstanding Chancellor in Attlee's Government.

At times he was intolerant. The aim of the Clarion Youth Campaign, for example, was not to concern itself with policy but simply to get members for the Labour Party. Stafford helped greatly with our overheads, but when he formed the Socialist League he sought to persuade us to link up with it. When we declined he flushed, banged the table, and said: 'In that case I shall withdraw my financial support.' A few years later, as Mr Pimlott tells us, he was adopting the same attitude to *Tribune*, which he and George Strauss had financed, bringing about the resignation of William Mellor and Michael Foot (both of whom feature prominently in Mr Hill's *Tribune 40*). It was the country's loss that his conception of himself in a messianic role reduced his effectiveness. (His rhetorical infelicities included a demand that the next Labour Government should immediately abolish the House of Lords and govern under emergency powers; and in 1936 he said that he did not believe it would be a bad thing for the British working class if Germany defeated us.) The range of his

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views in his seven years in parliament before the war meant that when, after Munich, he was right in advocating a broad alliance, his influence was much less than it had been at one time. The Popular Front never really got off the ground. In Clem Attlee's words, the Liberals were weak and the Communists unreliable, and 'you could never get the revolting Tories up to scratch'.

On the eve of war Cripps was in the wilderness and Attlee was ill. When my father rose to speak in the House in condemnation of Chamberlain it was Leo Amery (and probably Bob Boothby too) who, my father told me at the time, called out, 'Speak for England, Arthur'. The events of those months are meticulously related by Mr Pimlott. But on one point he surprises me with his suggestion that most Labour MPs would probably have preferred Halifax to Churchill as Prime Minister; I was present at a number of informal discussions between my father and the leader of the Liberal Party and only Churchill was really a starter.

Douglas Hill's *Tribune 40* is a history and anthology combined of *Tribune*. William Mellor was the first editor. I can claim credit for bringing Michael Foot and Mellor together in Oxford. Superficially he was a lugubrious saturnine character yet he had a tremendous influence on my generation and was warm-hearted, generous and incorruptible. His career was turbulent. *Tribune 40* does not dwell on the early difficulties but that does not detract from the book's value. It is a triumphant. though not self-satisfied, account of a periodical without which the Labour Party would have been much poorer and which has always maintained a commendable good humour and tolerance – virtues which have often been notably absent in the Labour Party's conduct of its affairs.

Eric Korn

Small is Small

A Guide for the Perplexed by E. F. SCHUMACHER *Cape* £3.95

The universal chorus of praise for Dr Schumacher, who died last month, makes us suspect that the intention is to bury his ideas along with him. Especially ominous is it to be told that his subversive slogans are now received dogma. Received they may be, but scarcely acted upon: it will take more than a few depots for collecting soft-drink bottles to reverse the ecological haemorrhage. In calculating that oil consumption could not continue to grow at the present rate for more than a couple of decades, Schumacher allowed for the discovery of huge new reserves, but predicted that each new discovery would be greeted as invalidating his gloomy forecasts: consumption continues to grow and each new discovery is gleefully greeted.

Small is Beautiful is a book to change the lives of people and nations. Its virtue is in its practical suggestions for alternatives to loutish ravening growth; its stampede of powerful ideas and asseverations leaves little time to question even some of his oddly precise prescriptions for what he believes are unchangeable human needs: no city must exceed half-a-million inhabitants, no workplace must cost more than $5,000 per employee to establish. If technology can alter these figures, so much the worse for technology. This suggests a wholesome metaphysical horror of bigness: Schumacher seems to see no benefit from the television transmitter, the electron microscope or the giant printing press. The ideal is the handpress, the well-equipped workbench.

Despite his socialism, however, he is closer to Chesterton and Gill than to William Morris; there is an undercurrent of obscurantist medievalism in his curiously intemperate attack on economics: 'something is uneconomic when it fails to produce an adequate profit in terms of money. The method of economics does not and cannot produce any other meaning.' But surely even the most reverently organic homesteader uses economic calculus in deciding what to do with his seed potatoes: practical problems cannot be solved exclusively by the application of *a priori* wisdom. 'Man is far too clever to survive without wisdom,' wrote Schumacher, and *A Guide for the Perplexed* sets out to chart that wisdom, showing a certain haste to abandon cleverness in the process. Yet we need both ('Use the brains God gave you, for nothing else can save you,' said Thurber), and Schumacher, quick to detect false antitheses in others (e.g. freedom versus 'planning'), sets up a few of his own.

The most significant contours on his world map are Aristotelian, 'the four levels of Being' – mineral, plant, animal, man; material, living, sentient, rational; unhelpfully pseudo-quantified as 'm +x +y +z'; and startlingly equated with the physical body, the etheric body, the astral body, and the spirit. Between them are 'ontological discontinuities': Man is, under God, supreme in the natural order, and must rule it wisely and lovingly, while striving to raise his level of awareness by prayer or yoga. The enemy is reductionism in any guise: relativism, positivism, Marx, Darwin, Freud. In *Small is Beautiful*, C. P. Snow is savaged:

> What do I miss, as a human being, if I have never heard of the Second Law of Thermodynamics? The answer is: nothing. And what do I miss by not knowing Shakespeare? . . . I simply miss my life.

(A characteristic footnote describes the corollary of ever-increasing entropy as a 'pseudo-scientific notion'.) In *A Guide for the Perplexed* the description of man as a naked ape (a modest and useful exercise in humility, with a Shakespearean precedent) is 'as inane as calling a dog a barking plant or a running cabbage'.

Evolutionism is 'a peculiarly degraded religion', 'science fiction, even a kind of hoax', but the only 'scientist of unimpeachable credentials' cited against it is one Douglas Dewar, an amateur ornithologist who wrote ill-informed critiques 30 years ago. Schumacher makes an untenable distinction between instructional sciences, which are permitted to be modestly useful, and descriptive sciences like biology, which has got above itself:

> It is not simply the complexity at the higher Levels of Being that militates against the experimental method, but, much more importantly, the fact that causality, which rules supreme at the Level of inanimate matter, is at the higher Levels put into a subservient position; it ceases to rule and is being *employed* by higher powers . . .

This is a sad doctrine: biologists who strive to show how organic systems may reach levels of infinite subtlety and complexity without divine interference make the world more wonderful, not less, everywhere marvellous if nowhere miraculous. It is loudly proclaimed, says Schumacher, that 'man is nothing but a complex biochemical mechanism'. But is it? The quotation is not from a reductionist but from a hostile critic: 'nothing-butism' is largely fictitious, surviving only among a dwindling but important clique of psychologists. Biologists do not say 'nothing but', rather 'and all this also'.

If the life sciences debase us, what does

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Schumacher offer to raise levels of consciousness? Though he denounces modern occultism, he proposes the exemplars of Therese Neumann, the stigmatist, Edgar Cayce, the automatic writer, and Jakob Lorber, to whom an inner voice dictated 'the *New St John's Gospel* in ten big volumes'. If this seems a depressing prospect, Schumacher's arguments are invigorating, provoking, and often dramatic. The possibility of being wrong would not have terrified him, for he follows Aquinas's dictum that 'the slenderest knowledge of the highest things is more desirable than the most certain knowledge obtained of lesser things'. For him, philosophy has been pursuing a chimera of certainty since Descartes, and our maps omit everything that matters. The muezzin-call to wake from spiritual sloth is expressed with rare trenchancy:

> Our ordinary mind always tries to persuade us that we are nothing but acorns and that our greatest happiness will be to become bigger, fatter, shinier acorns: but that is of interest only to pigs.

Jeremy Treglown

Generation Game

Daniel Martin by JOHN FOWLES *Cape* £4.95

Even John Fowles's tensest fictions suffer from the long-windedness and didacticism that overwhelm this one. *The Collector*, his first and – it has to be said – best so far, abandons its frighteningly well-individualised, quirky narrator in the middle to go over the same events from the point of view of his victim, a pretentious art student already adequately established through the reported dialogue. And her efforts to educate her captor's taste in interior decorating, food, clothes and so on, only too accurately foreshadow the patronising lectures in which Fowles has increasingly indulged in subsequent works. 'What are we faced with in the 19th century?' he muses in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, before setting out on one of these tutorial soliloquies, and one is reminded how often and how centrally teacher-pupil relationships figure in his work – the art students in 'The Ebony Tower', living with an old painter whose biographer himself married one of his own pupils; or the Hampstead girl in 'The Enigma' who advises the pleading copper who fancies her that to solve a crime you have to approach it like a novelist.

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The trick in that story – fiction posing as facts solved by fiction – is characteristic too, and in that case successful. But books which are absorbed in their own bookishness are always in danger of pedantry, particularly when their author's imagination, experience or, as in *Daniel Martin*, mere narrative pace fails him. The Daniel of the title is his own author-narrator, a famous English scriptwriter repelled by the conditions of his Hollywood success and reacting against them by disgorging the Oxford novel that all Oxford authors, John Fowles among them, sooner or later seem forced to write. The 704-page plot is easily summarised. While at Oxford, Dan slept with another undergraduate, Jane, whose twin sister Nell he subsequently married, Jane settling for a budding philosophy don, Anthony. The Dan-Nell set-up produces a daughter before it disintegrates; she will have an 'affaire', as Fowles calls it, with another Oxford contemporary of Ma and Pa. Meanwhile, Nell remarries – the husband being Oxford contemporary number six (I think), a landed lord – and Dan goes off with a film-actress the age of his own daughter. But as the generation game enters injury time, the stopwatch is put back by Anthony's melodramatic death, leaving room for a conclusion which, since few other readers are likely to reach it and you've guessed anyway, I have no hesitation in revealing: his widow Jane, who, you remember, was twin number one, shacks up with Dan in his childhood home.

So what fills it all out? First, a very great deal of interpersonal discussion of interpersonal relationships. Second, many lengthy passages about the degeneracy of the media, the condition of England, the condition of America and related topics. Third, descriptive writing. And fourth, several parentheses in Dan's sex-life, including a scene with two Cockney sisters, this time simultaneously, and his sexual initiation with a farmgirl.

Almost any fiction could be broken down like this, of course, but few do the job for themselves. What exposes the narrative elements of *Daniel Martin* so crudely is the featureless immobility of its prose. Here are the Jemez Mountains, for example, in South America:

> Their atmosphere is paradoxically very European – to be precise, Etruscan and Minoan . . . that is, they are haunted by loss and mystery, by a sense of some magical relationship, glimpsed both in the art and what little is known of their inhabitants' way of life, between man and nature.

Any the wiser? And the various narrators' impermeable conviction not only that they have something to say, but that this something is to do with how you say things, results in a pedantry which soaks every incident and every thought. The commonest phrases in the book are 'metaphorically speaking' and 'in both senses'. The narrative climax itself, Dan's sexual reuniting with Jane, produces this reflection: 'It came to him . . . when he was still lying half across her, that the failure could have been put in terms of grammatical person. It had happened in the third, when he had craved the first and second.' And the closing section, his consequent split-up with the young actress, contains an exchange in which Dan tries to assert himself:

> 'I'm not going to be cast as the Lovelace in your life.'
> 'Who was he?'
> 'The seducer in *Clarissa*. Richardson.'
> Silence fell on them, of the worst kind . . .

Understandably, I'm afraid.

Alan Ryan

Blunt Instrument

The Hite Report by SHERE HITE *Talmy, Franklin* £6.95

Contrary to rumour, the chief casualty of *The Hite Report* is not the American male, but Him in whose image the American male is created. Or, as one of Shere Hite's respondents aptly puts it, 'sex in the best of all possible worlds? My clitoris would be in my vagina for Christ's sake, so I could come when I screw!' A major complaint of these irritated ladies is that if the Great Designer intended women to achieve orgasm through orthodox sexual intercourse, he had some odd ideas about where to situate the clitoris. Not that this is the only count against the Almighty's attempt to secure the needs of pleasure and procreation simultaneously. Like others before her, Miss Hite finds that a majority of women feel sexual desire most strongly during menstruation, when they are least fertile, and in most cultures forbidden sex anyway.

The information which Miss Hite has come up with is not novel. Ann Koedt's book on *The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm* did an effective job of demolishing the notion that mere girls get clitoral orgasms while real women get vaginal orgasms instead – a notion that is anyway a physiological nonsense. And years before that, Kinsey had discovered that coitus narrowly construed was unlikely to give an orgasm to women who were entirely capable of giving themselves one by masturbating.

What gives *The Hite Report* the interest which it undeniably does possess is, oddly, its extreme intellectual and moral crudeness. Shere Hite distributed 100,000 questionnaires containing absurdly woolly and open-ended questions ('42. Describe how most men and women have had sex with you' is about par for the course) and, aside from a few tables to show the percentage of respondents who masturbated and how, she lets them speak for themselves in direct quotation. She is entirely frank about how the questionnaire was distributed, and where the replies came from – cynics may notice that New York State supplied over a quarter of the geographically locatable replies, and that the distribution was mostly done through women's groups. Whether the female population at large is as angry, anxious and resentful as many of the responses quoted here it's impossible to tell; but any man who has ever feared that he was assaulting a piece of delicate machinery with a blunt instrument would do well to steer clear of Miss Hite, who will only confirm his worst suspicions.

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There is naturally some low-minded pleasure to be had from the replies – orgasms may come too rarely, but they certainly give satisfaction when they do: 'my head separates from my body at a higher elevation', says one enthusiast, while another defines the event: 'orgasm . . . a compelling sensation of light pouring out of his head and into mine. I start pouring out light to match; my body dissolves into pure light'. But there is a sort of moral doublethink underlying Miss Hite's own contribution. She begins by insisting that while everyone else tries to tell women what they ought to feel she is just reporting what they do feel. She isn't. She tells her readers that there's something wrong with them if they shy away from the idea of lesbian relationships, she suggests that their reports on what happens during intercourse are unreliable because their sensations are dulled or diffused by the presence of a penis, and all this against the run of the evidence, which curiously enough suggests that most women enjoy sexual intercourse even if it doesn't result in orgasm. And there's a sort of systematic naïveté about the wider social implications of recommending masturbation as just a quick, convenient and reliable method of achieving orgasm. One doesn't have to believe everything David Holbrook says to wonder if a masturbatory ethic is an entirely open option. Still, the valuable thing about a book like *The Hite Report* is that it is essentially reassuring; anxieties and miseries which seem peculiarly and horribly one's own are, if not cured, at least diminished when seen to be the common property of personkind.

Susannah Clapp

Suburbanity

Injury Time by BERYL BAINBRIDGE *Duckworth* £3.95
The Golden Child by PENELOPE FITZGERALD *Duckworth* £4.95
A Raving Monarchist by JULIAN RATHBONE *Michael Joseph* £4.50
My Son Max by JACK COPE *Heinemann* £4.50

One of the fascinations of Beryl Bainbridge's novels lies in watching her characters nibble their way to disaster via the routine dishevelments of their domestic lives. Bewildered but oddly prescient, they quiz the irritations and occasional attractions of friends and relatives with obscure feelings of despair and vague romantic impulses, and arrive on the other side of murder, abortion and abandonment still peering piecemeal at their lives. Her imposition of calamity has sometimes seemed capriciously vengeful, but the alarms of Miss Bainbridge's new novel are orchestrated so cunningly that the plot moves from an inconvenient adultery to siege by gunmen with dismaying ease: discomfort is simply accelerated.

Binny and Edward are having a bit on the side in NW6. Their embraces on the sofa are under constant threat from Binny's big children (variously too 'boisterous' after Brownies or monstrously pubescent) and from Edward's committee-bound wife; their view of each other skitters convincingly from distaste to tenderness, feeding on fragments: Binny has large teeth but no small talk, a casual attitude to food (she thinks artichokes are 'a waste of time') and 'no values'; Edward first appears failing to hear the punch-line of a joke, is later seen engagingly galoshed and be-piped, and exits tumbling out of a moving car. It is Binny's wish for recognition by Edward's other life which prompts catastrophe. Touched by guilt about her solitary existence (he flinches from the thought of her 'reeling out of the dentist alone'), Edward agrees to a dinner party, inviting a married couple of dull unpredictability to frizzled chops behind carefully shuttered windows. Just as George and Muriel Simpson seem about to precipitate a comedy of disappointment, Binny's friend Alma reels in drunk and beaten; just as Alma's floppy exuberance seems on the point of producing a dismal climax of embarrassment, a gang of bank-robbers bursts in, claiming the company as hostages. The characters are turned still further in on themselves, and their delinquencies and fortitudes prised out like clues to an undefined crime.

The disorders and disruptions with which the novel deals are, as always in Miss Bainbridge's writing, glimpsed askance – not collected into themes, but momentarily frozen into attitudes. The men – plumply serviced and ineptly sentimental – come in for more oblique blame but less misery than the women, who are caught in odd postures of neglect and disarray, bleating strange litanies of overwork and underemployment ('after the children were walking and we gave the pram away, I used to cross my arms over my chest when we went out'), against which a rape is credibly presented as merely another incidental glumness. But Beryl Bainbridge's skill is in squinnying at her characters so that the large contours of despair are dissolved. They proclaim their loves and loathings dimpled with breadcrumbs, adorned with swellings, fiddling with troublesome socks, their suburbanity disintegrating into jerky blotches of extraordinariness and aggression. This is why they are both funny and interesting – and why Beryl Bainbridge makes her imitators look either weedy or windy.

Penelope Fitzgerald's first novel is a small, benign thriller set in a London museum. It has an amiable, mostly baffled hero, who worries about his mortgage and his absentee wife, and an assortment of absurdities, excesses and enthusiasms which variously constitute and congeal into characters. There are traces throughout *The Golden Child* of a mildly sinister comedy about 'the pride and bitter jealousy which is the poetry of museum-keeping', where pointed references to the availability of conservation poisons, plaster-grinders and large incinerators spice the gloom of ancient inter-Departmental rivalries and enliven the damply cheerful crowds of visitors. Unfortunately, this aspect is under heavy siege from an over-inflated plot, which begins, not unpromisingly, with the arrival of a special Tutankhamun-style treasure hoard, complete with curse and code, and proceeds to balloon in an unlikely fashion, scattering confidential diplomatic memoranda, bodies in the library and the quad, gun-battles through the Department of Unglazed Ceramics, and mysterious assignations in Moscow. It brings in its wake a trail of recognisable grotesques, yet the book would have been neater and more credible with fewer obvious snipes and sparkier with fewer weighty intrigues.

Smoother, racier and queasier, *A Raving Monarchist* bases the capable excitements of its plot on Spanish political scheming, but extracts as many minor frissons from the personal palpitations of its two central figures – a pair of English homosexuals on holiday. Maurice is clever and charming and deeply disturbed, fully equipped with vertigo, bitten nails, a dismal childhood and a murky adolescence. He pouts, giggles and taunts his companion (on the lines of not being 'a clammy knickers' or an 'awful pig'), while Archie, though sometimes 'shrewish', adopts in the main a poetically paternal role, noting when Maurice's hair needs trimming, but attentive also to literature, churches and the sky (variously 'glaucous' and apocalyptic). Slabs of architectural and topographical description are given rather more generous coverage than the political dilemma informing the plot; but since niceness is for the most part cosily co-extensive with right-mindedness (the villain likes Baroque churches with lots of gilt and cupids), this turns out to matter less than it should.

It is perhaps not surprising that the eponymous hero of *My Son Max* should be at once omnipresent and unrecognisable. Few people would turn to a mother for a sharply-focused likeness of her child; when the child in question is a young black South African, pursued by both police and ill-defined underground organisations, and eventually shot dead in mysterious circumstances, no one would expect a biography free of the throbbing declamation ('Have we the right to love this strange revengeful land?'). 'Mame' Solo's account of Max's life diligently plots his progress from bright, intense and comradely childhood at a multiracial school, through disenchanted studenthood, catharsis in the cane-fields, love-affairs and phone-buggings in Johannesburg, sketchy political involvement and the recapturing of 'urgent longings' in the bush country. The sprawling structure of the novel and the ungainliness of its prose seem designed to illustrate the artless sincerity of its narrator; but, though her good intentions are unquestionable, these have never guaranteed truth-telling or illumination.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Spurling

An Antidote to Melancholy

British Painting 1952-1977 *Royal Academy*

The latest Jubilee exhibition at the Royal Academy is no occasion for instant chauvinism. Indeed, it comes at first sight as a knockout blow, as if one's favourite artists had suddenly agreed to send in to an RA Summer Show and it looked no different from usual. The feeling is well expressed by the title of Norman Stevens's painting *Collapsing Structure in the Art Historian's English Garden*, an urge to emigrate, to bury oneself in the 18th century or to take up some useful profession. After the first shock, suspicion sets in: the list of selectors is composed entirely of RAs or ARAs, except for one independent painter (John Hoyland) and one dealer (Monika Kinley); could they have deliberately intended, like treacherous tribal chieftains, to invite the opposition into their camp and then massacre them?

The resemblance to a Summer Show cannot have been entirely unintentional. The 15 rooms are crammed with paintings, hung much too close to one another on the traditional Academy principle that the area your picture covers is all you can decently claim for your own. The selection of individual works seems to be more or less random, with little attempt to convey a particular artist's range or development. The 25-year period is given no art-historical focus of any sort, nor are the comings and goings within it. The thing is a labyrinth in which every two or three paces to right or left takes you down a fresh tunnel. It's true that artists with superficially similar styles (abstract, constructionist, figurative) are apt to be herded together, but this acts only as an extra source of confusion, an effect of distorting mirrors. Paintings by the same artist are often split up and sent off to fight a lonely battle in distant rooms. *All* the Academy's own painter-members are included. But surely, even in these unhelpful circumstances, quality will out? In the end it does. With time and patience and, ideally, a pair of blinkers, it is possible to repair one's damaged faith in British Painting 1952-1977. So for the benefit of those readers with less time and perhaps less faith, I offer here an exhibition within an exhibition, a thread through the labyrinth.

We start in Room I with two characteristic watercolours – an apparently guileless but strangely sinister landscape and an unequivocally sinister bar scene – by Burra, hung at opposite ends of the same wall, with much distraction between. In Room II, *Night Painting*, painted ten years earlier by the little-known Charles Howard, has a similarly Gothic effect, though it's an abstract. Pursuing the Gothic we now move into Room III to pay strictly limited homage to those twin grandees of British art, Sutherland and Bacon. Both violently insist on the ugly mortality of creation – the one through sharply linear inanimate objects against a lush wilderness, the other through smeared pink, orange and white flesh against a formal, linear interior. At their best, as in Sutherland's romantic *Forest with Chains* and Bacon's humorous *Self-Portrait* – look at that waving left shoe and the sleeve sunk deep in the raincoat pocket – they are powerful image-makers. But both have imprisoned themselves in their own theatrical simplifications, to the point at which the attitudes they so regularly strike diminish any meaning they might once have had.

For immediate refreshment we therefore return through Room II to the South Rooms, to be confronted by Pasmore's hard, cold roundel inscribed with spidery lines and inclusively entitled *Life and Space, no. 21*. Beyond that, one can relax completely with Bryan Wynter's riverine abstract *Green Confluence* and three airy Cornish abstracts by Lanyon. On the way out, observe in the same corner as the Pasmore two sober brown paintings by Prunella Clough, one of the few painters in the exhibition whose range is properly represented. Of these two, one is from her flat, figurative period, the other an abstract from the late Sixties, but with its sense of smuts and northern industrial atmosphere directly related to the first. The third Clough – the much freer and more spacious abstract, *Undergrowth*, of 1975 – hangs in Room III.

Room III, apart from being chronically overcrowded, gives one the best idea of what this exhibition might have been. Here you can see Hilton's energetically Matisse-like *Dancing Woman*; two fine figure-groups by Keith Vaughan; two Ben Nicholson relief-paintings (though one is a *trompe-l'oeil*); three of William Scott's kitchen-utensil still-lives (growing steadily more abstract between 1956 and 1977); a sumptuous brand-new Hoyland; a busy, jovial triptych by Alan Davie; and Kitaj's charming yellow and pink conversation-piece *Where the Railroad Leaves the Sea*. Hockney, whose *A Bigger Splash* also hangs in this room, is one of those who doesn't escape the great Academy massacre.

Rooms IV, V, and VI are better avoided altogether, unless you care to take in the subsidiary exhibition of self-portraits, which might be entitled *Towards an Anatomy of British Melancholy*. Start with Vanessa Bell looking wanly down her nose from under a large hat and William Roberts's famous restaurant-full of Vorticists in Room I, move to Robert Medley (caught in the act of sliding out of the canvas) and Rodrigo Moynihan in Room II, include the raincoated Bacon again (he looks almost light-hearted in this company), and by way of the woebegone Stanley Spencer in Room IV finish with the thoroughly gloomy Michael Andrews in Room X.

The antidote to melancholy is to be found in the Octagon, where there is a delectable Paul Huxley in his earlier manner – a dark-green cone and two triangles, blue and purple, floating in mobile-like balance on a yellow ground. Beyond, in the Lecture Room is the other later and larger Huxley, rich grass-green with orange, magenta, deep blue and deep green rectangles poised around a black square, as if time had stopped the moment after dawn. But you will need a catalogue or a copy of the NS held to the left side of the head to keep out the firework display hung so insensitively next to it.

Room VII must be starred for its pair of large coloured Rileys. They are shamefully hung in a corner and their delicacy affronted by a gigantic and inert stretch of diagonal stripery which turns this part of the room into a corridor, as if somebody hoped you would move on quickly. Room VIII contains two eccentric bathroom-paintings by Victor Newsome which are worth stopping for, but you should now direct your steps without further ado to the Architectural Room at the end of the exhibition where you will be amazed to see, so late in the day, an example of imaginative hanging. Two small water-colour still-lives in Leonard McComb's unmistakeable gossamer style are placed next to an enormous heaving and spraying sea on two panels by John Hubbard. On the opposite wall another big Hockney goes down with scarcely a struggle; but our tour is over . . . One may regret a few omissions – and resent far more inclusions – but where else is there such a comprehensive display of British contemporary art?

Television

Ian Hamilton

Optional Extras

Well, all right, but what would *you* do if you found yourself transported from whatever grade of dinginess you're currently bogged down in to a fairy-tale 20-bedroom pad with 17 servants and as many limousines; if instead of earning whatever rubbish you're now earning you suddenly struck gold: £18,650 a year plus £43,000 expenses; if instead of wondering why x doesn't call you any more you find the creep grovelling to tend your every whim? What *would* you do if instead of having those Opinions you suddenly got Power?

In other words, what would any of us do if we were Peter Jay? Little wonder that journalists spend so much time wondering just that. They're used to pools winners and property developers, they're used to this kind of thing happening to other (pretty rotten) kinds of people. But for it to happen

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to a hack, to one of them, and for the price of the hack's elevation to have merely been the bare-faced abandonment of his Integrity – well, Christ, who wouldn't chuck *that* in if the price was right? And if envious ex-colleagues try to do you down, just think of the fun spraying them with grandiose No Comments and I Don't See Any Inconsistency At Alls. Memories get shorter all the time, and it won't be many months before most people have forgotten the relentless, unfoolable doom-watching of your shabby years.

Or so Jay clearly hopes. His response to *Panorama*'s investigation into how 'he is getting on with the job' (BBC-1) was shifty and resentful when it involved direct cross-questioning, although he had clearly collaborated in the making of the film; there were ludicrous sequences portraying him at breakfast with Cy Vance ('Hi, Peter, how's David'; 'Oh, David's in really excellent form, I must say') or phoning from his car ('Jeremy, Ambassador here. Vance gave me a lot of insights'). No doubt he knew that the ultimate product could hardly fail to be damaging. Not only did we have the monosyllabic interviews, we also saw Jay ineptly (it's something to do with the way he walks, I think) hosting innumerable cocktail parties and making vacuous speeches in which he compared his father-in-law to Moses or boasted to the stunned yanks that 'our reserves are rising so rapidly as to be almost an embarrassment'. The cocktail-party sequences yielded some excellent comic moments: there was the one given for the Battle of Britain (the party is known locally as the Bottle of Britain) where *Panorama* quizzed a befuddled-looking air attaché from the German Embassy: 'I usually attend all the parties to whom I am invited,' he explained when asked if he didn't feel just a little out of place. And there was a nice exchange with a totally plastered American general who was pressed to give his views on Anglo-American relations and after agonising thought came out with: 'Well, you're *there* (more thought) and well, we're *here*, and well . . .', and then simperingly faded out.

If these party scenes gave new meaning to the term 'security leak', *Panorama* didn't get very far when they began wondering why the Embassy needed a staff of 570, 170 of whom worked in the Defence Section. The security chief stonewalled and Jay himself was complacently tight-lipped. More fun was to be had when Maggie came to town and Jay was obliged to help her with her image-building schedule. He was also obliged to smirk at his boots when Thatcher was asked at a press conference if she would keep him on if she became PM: '*When* I become Prime Minister, I'll keep my options open.' Much leering among the assembled hacks, as you can well imagine. Hi, Peter, welcome back . . .

Stan Barstow's second *Cost of Loving* play (Yorkshire) was an efficient, intermittently touching but too predictable little piece about a shy convalescent encountering a bored temptress. The temptress stubs cigarettes out too early (a sure sign) and the convalescent gawps through downcast eyes; she gets him in the end with the old sun-oil stunt and thus equips him for marriage to a nice girl when he goes back home.

Property

Raymond Eisenstark

Streets of Gold

The Grosvenor Story *The Grosvenor Office, 53 Davies Street, until 14 October*

Q: Which property tycoon has recently carried through large shopping centres or office developments in Chester, Lewisham, Macclesfield, Northampton, Runcorn, Staines and Wrexham, has run into opposition over similar projects for Ealing and Sheffield, and has been repulsed from the centre of Carlisle? Joe Levy, Charles Clore, Eric Miller?
A: The 5th Duke of Westminster.

Strictly speaking, one should attribute these ferro-concrete jewels in His Grace's coronet to the Grosvenor Estate. This august establishment manages a series of private family trusts for the sole purpose of augmenting the Grosvenor coffers, which after swelling for 300 years have been full to bursting for nearly a century. A sample of the farther-flung Grosvenor treasure may be of interest. There is a prosperous industrial estate on Annacis Island, British Columbia, a Grosvenor Centre and other interests in downtown Honolulu, and a 10,000-acre sheep farm near Wagga Wagga. There would still be sizeable estates in Florida had it not been for confiscations following the tiresome events of 1776; and if these bring in no revenue, their loss gave the 2nd Duke of Westminster a pretext for his stubborn refusal to sell the site of the US Embassy in London to the American government. There were, and still may be, untrumpeted interests in Rhodesia and South Africa. Within the United Kingdom, the Grosvenors retain thousands of agricultural acres in Cheshire, Flintshire, Sutherland and Northern Ireland. Lest we forget, there is also the small matter of 300-odd of the most fruitful acres of London, 100 in Mayfair and the rest in Belgravia and Pimlico.

All this (or the most flattering parts of it) may be gathered from *The Grosvenor Story*, an exhibition put on at the Grosvenor Office to celebrate the tercentenary of the estate. The Grosvenors are regularly described as the richest urban landlords in the country; but this forgets the Crown and the Church Commissioners. The Grosvenors do indeed pay taxes like you and me; long are the faces when their servants recount how all Pimlico between Victoria Station and the Thames had to be sold after the second Duke's death in 1953.

However, a glance at the Grosvenor Office (a richly adorned Georgian building now for the first time open to the public) and the hundred fabulously lucrative acres of Mayfair freehold around it soon dispels any sense of hard times or diminishing returns. Belgravia is also intact, so that you may walk almost from Sloane Square to Bond Street, passing through Eaton Square, Belgrave Square, up Park Lane and through Grosvenor Square, and only step off Grosvenor freeholds along the lower half of Park Lane. No other major city in the world can boast such a concentration of absolutely private and inviolable prime property. Nor is the estate exempt from special privilege. The Leasehold Reform Act, which was devised to enable sitting tenants to buy their domestic freeholds, hardly operates on the Grosvenor Estate because the rateable value above which tenants are not entitled to buy is nearly everywhere exceeded in these plutocratic environs. The Estate has also a unique 'management scheme', by which even freeholds sold remain subject to its covenants.

The presumption of these schemes is that the Grosvenor Estate is a model landlord which has the interest of the community at heart, as the exhibition encourages us to believe. Too frequently this is not the case. It is constantly at loggerheads with Westminster City Council because it encourages commercial tenants rather than residential ones so as to increase its rental and avoid the effects of leasehold reform. In individual cases too the estate can be a harsh taskmaster. A Pimlico tenant was recently precipitated into signing a lease, only to find that she herself, rather than the estate, was next day served with a repairs notice.

On the Grosvenors themselves the exhibition is interesting but somewhat coy, for the brutal truth is that none of them has ever done anything exceptional. Compared even with the royals, they have been an artless crew. The Georgian Grosvenors, overgrown squires up from the Cheshire sticks, were conventionally dissolute, their ermined Victorian successors conventionally dutiful. Their artistic patronage was pedestrian and their one great architectural monument, Eaton Hall near Chester, was foolishly sacrificed in 1961 to the whim of an economy-minded financial adviser to the third Duke. The show parts of the London estates were due to the shrewdness and vision of leaseholders like Thomas Cubitt. In neither Belgravia nor Mayfair did the Grosvenors effect churches or monuments to match their wealth; their only merit was that of backing sound propositions when they saw them. To what extent they exerted themselves in development will doubtless be clearer from the publication next week of the 39th volume of the inexorable *Survey of London*, a general account of the hitherto undocumented Mayfair estate.

If the first Duke cuts the figure of a modest hero in the Grosvenor story, his successor the 2nd Duke is its dashing but repellent villain. He showed surprising tenacity in his harrying of Jews and homosexuals; the horrid story of how he drove his eminent brother-in-law Lord Beauchamp abroad and nearly to suicide is given in Christopher Sykes's biography of Evelyn Waugh. On the second Duke's behalf it has been said that he was an able businessman, and that under his influence the estate gradually diversified itself, exported capital, and came to adopt its present internationalism. Nevertheless some of what went on between the wars on the London estates was decidedly fishy, and resulted in the abrupt resignation of the 2nd Duke's closest adviser.

When all is said and done, the most extraordinary thing about the Grosvenors' urban estates is that they have survived. The exhibition never presents serious arguments

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to why that should be a good thing; indeed it is less a tribute to the Grosvenors' tenacity than a reproach to British conservatism on property matters that they have rarely been closely examined on this subject. Meanwhile nothing is changed and it is business as usual. When Leonora Grosvenor married Patrick Lichfield recently, the young nobs still came up from town by special train, royalty turned up, and the city of Chester virtually ground to a loyal halt for the afternoon. Noël Coward has a line about the Grosvenors in *Private Lives*. 'Whose yacht is that?' 'The Duke of Westminster's, I expect. It always is.' Yes, and not just yachts either.

Films

John Coleman

Oathy

Slap Shot (X) *Plazas 1 and 2; ABCs Shaftesbury Avenue, Bayswater and Fulham Road*
Valentino (X) *Leicester Square Theatre*
Suspiria (X) *ABC Shaftesbury Avenue*

In an uncertain world, one thing is certain: *Slap Shot* could only have come out of America. I doubt if it stands up as anything so intellectually alluring as a metaphor (this has been suggested), but it does very well – where it does well at all – as a whambang entertainment calculated to bring out the worst in most of us. It is a terrible spree, a knowing, foul-mouthed revel skating round and into the seamy rinks of minor-league ice hockey. What makes it so damnably attractive is probably a combination of talents rather beautifully locking together: a team effort devoted to low ends and achieving most of them. George Roy Hill, it may be recalled, has worked with Paul Newman (who plays Reggie, the grizzled coach and captain of the Pennsylvanian Charlestown Chiefs) on such monumental trifles as *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Sting*. This time, he turns the directorial charm on to a very strange, oathy and earthy script, written by a woman, Nancy Dowd, who is apparently the sister of a hockey-player. She would need to be some sort of kin to a professional to have turned in the scathing, loving-and-loathing story she has. Strother Martin has a wonderful part as the wretched Chiefs' manager, intent on dumping them; Dede Allen, one of the more rightly respected editors in the business, has cut the event down to endurable size (it runs 124 minutes but one only registers this towards the close); there is a pleasant, silly bonus in the appearances of three bespectacled brothers, the Hansons – two of them *are* brothers, called Carlson – who look at first like retarded, toy-enjoying nothings but turn out to be whizzes at murderous stick-and-fist play when Reggie decides the team requires a new, dirty image.

The Chiefs wind up, via an impossible sequence on the ice when their one good guy does a stirring strip-tease, as winners in Syracuse. It is all, at once, larger and smaller than life as we know it in Soho or NW1. There is an astounding shot, for instance, of towering chimneys belching from a local mill: a mere background bit, though relevant in that the impending closure of the mill will put men out of work and therefore hasten the diminution of the Chiefs' already dwindling following. There is the bravura of a series of bums thrust from a coach window as the players and their groupies hit a new town. There is a seam-bursting, generous celebration of vulgarity that takes you by the throat, a showbiz elation and coarseness in the making that carry their moments of conviction. It is, of course, a load of ingeniously arranged crap. The invitation is to admire these goons and their thuggish behaviour, to become an approving spectator at their moronic festivities and fiascos. But it moves so fast, as if on those menacing, slicing skates, that one might just be forgiven for not noticing till the mind re-asserts itself, starts asking such questions as how the Newman character could be so stupid about who owns the team, how – when he finds out – he acts as he does, why Newman, the actor, looks and sounds so direly uneasy in his role.

Ken Russell has made some goodish, two or three great movies. The great ones tend – such are the processes of memory – to reduce themselves to a handful made for television: his *Song of Summer* (Delius), his *Isadora*. What he is now doing in the cinema more and more passes my understanding. Persisting in a belief in his 'appalling talent', as Dilys Powell once described it and as John Baxter titled a very useful book on him, I am at a loss. Why should he be progressively setting out on a course that entails the post-mortem humiliation of people quite as substantial as himself? What's Valentino to him, or he to Valentino, that he should wee on him? Rudolf Nureyev is a splendid dancer and a strong, impetuous, fascinating man, if one can trust the evidence of scraps of film and a TV interview when he put his interlocuter in something of a tizzy. Being a star in his own right, why did he consent to impersonate another, the eponymous hero of *Valentino*? That shy silent-screen actor, that Rudolph (the most clean-cut account of him is Alexander Walker's, now in paperback, Sphere Books), could hardly have been more different. His imperiousness only came to fruition in front of the cameras; he was then dominating, low-keyed at a period when acting had a way of looking more like demonstrating an emotion, even sardonic and humorous. Our other Rudi is, perversely, all these things in life and in Russell's ludicrous 'life' of Valentino, but at all the wrong moments. In the biopic side of it, he comes on amused, confident, nostril-flaring: in the farcical reconstructions of shards from real Valentino movies (notably, *Monsieur Beaucaire*), he figures as a farded idiot.

This incredibly wrong-headed reversal of personalities is simply, if centrally, one instance of poor taste in an affair that appears to be intent on inventing it. A pink powder-puff, oranges, and a fistful of ju-ju bones recur so heavily as motifs that one's own sanity begins to come under fire. There are Russell set-pieces – a sick episode in a hick jail, a boxing-match with risibly attendant dancers – that defy facts and sense. There is also a superlative opening sequence, when Rudi tangoes with Anthony Dowell (as Nijinsky). The rest ought to be silence. Dario Argento's *Suspiria* has Joan Bennett, Alida Valli and a battery of camera-and-lab effects, not forgetting an ear-searing score, enough to make one feel indulgent towards the Russell: this is Lewis Carroll meeting Caligari, or fun-and-maims in a Chinese brothel. The last refers to the decor, not the impenetrable plot.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Golgothas

Barbarians *Greenwich*
tufff *Theatre Upstairs*
Bubbling Brown Sugar *Royalty*
Harry Outside *New End, Hampstead*

Barrie Keeffe seems to be becoming the theatrical champion of a sub-stratum many of his fellow-citizens care to recognise only when they are composing feverish, flouncing letters to *Any Answers*: the yob, the hooligan, the adolescent hard-case who can boast little, if anything, in the way of education, job or future. In *Gotcha* we saw such a boy poised with a match over a petrol tank, holding his headmaster hostage in inarticulate protest against the schooling he hadn't been given; and now here he is again, transformed only for the worse, his life a progressively more uncontrolled spin towards Brixton or the Scrubs. In the first part of *Barbarians* he, together with a white friend and a black one, tries and fails to pinch a car. In the second, the same trio appears draped in Manchester United reds and whites, trying (and again failing) to wangle their way into the 1976 Cup Final. And so to a third-part debacle at the Notting Hill carnival: white tearaway screwing a broken bottle into uppity black friend, leaving white friend to take the rap – which white friend willingly does, since circumstances have pushed him into the army and the army is sending him to Belfast and he doesn't want to go. Not much hope for some in Britain 1977.

Mr Keeffe's charity and good sense aren't in doubt: he recognises his characters' frustration, but he neither excuses their excesses nor patronises their helplessness. All the same, the evening, like his protagonist is in slow decline; and I think this is because roaring Paul is as much the victim of his author's sly plans as of society itself. We know he won't get his longed-for ticket into Wembley: we know, because it really happened, that Southampton will complete his misery by beating Manchester one-nil Similarly, it seems strange that the boy who mucks along amiably enough with blacks

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in the first play should actually be reminiscing about the National Front march through Lewisham by the third. The plot is against him: he must fufil Mr Keeffe's dark pleasures by degenerating into a monster, an unalloyed 'barbarian', even at the price of probability. The only thing to do with such a part is to pack it with sound and fury, which Nick Edmett duly does, raging, frenziedly railing, even hammering his scrofulous scalp against the wall of Wembley stadium. An alarming apparition, a baleful bogey-man come to spoil our middle-class slumber; not quite, I fear, an authentic threat.

The 'tufffs' of Bille Brown's play in the Royal Court attic seem pretty tame besides him, though that's largely because they are much younger, a crucial point inevitably clouded by a cast of over-age actors. Two baby-faced hoodlums run into a physically crippled but intellectually hale classmate on a Queensland beach, provoking an edgy debate about what is and isn't 'tufff'. Was Beethoven 'tufff' because he went on composing when deaf? The school Hercules, whose life consists of surfboarding and swaggering about, assents rather too readily to this proposition, and his last-frame reconciliation with the chairbound swot is not as plausible as Mr Brown might like to suppose, nor as significant. At this age boys' affections are fickle and temporary. It's an attractive, kindly piece, especially welcome because it ventures into a child-world almost entirely neglected by the adult theatre; but I don't think it adds very much to the thickening file on Australian machismo.

Americans have long tended to romanticise their cities, celebrating their supposed virtues in songs that would seem frankly droll in these climes ('Newcastle! Newcastle! A wonderful town'); but they've had the tact to stay clear of their more notorious golgothas. How surprising, then, to come across a show as artlessly and uncritically in love with Harlem as *Bubbling Brown Sugar*. It 'flows with energy'; it's 'so alive'; it 'makes me feel alive'; it 'makes things happen inside'; and so on, and so on. Out pour the testimonials, most of them delivered by two naïve and impressionable whites taken on a grand tour of the place's musical history by a group of party-going denizens led by Billy Daniels and Elaine Delmar. Poverty and crime are forgotten as they all belt out *Harlem, Sweet Harlem, Harlem Time, Harlem 70, Harlem Makes Me Feel* and other plaudits specially composed for the nonce: 125th Street, that drab and doleful thoroughfare, emerges as the uptown equivalent of the Great White Way, that brightly-lit street of dreams it was once mandatory for every well-set-up American musical to acclaim. What was presumably conceived as an expression of black pride in black culture has become a sort of glossy tourist brochure, full of selective reporting and overblown claims.

This is exasperating, because there's really rather a good show under the imbecile plot-substitute and sprayed-on glamour. Or, rather, not a 'show' at all, but a series of golden oldies, notably *Sweet Georgia Brown, Ain't Misbehavin'* and *God Bless the Child*, all put over with fine energy and some with genuine skill. Ignore the gilded razzmatazz – indeed, shut your eyes – and your ears may enjoy themselves. And how best to cope with the week's second American import, Corinne Jacker's *Harry Outside*, the first of a season of off-Broadway plays at the agreeable little theatre in New End. Well, it's a dense, portentous piece about a crazed genius, a brilliantly unorthodox architect who spends his days and nights in a forest glade, beavering away at an unnamed 'project', which he then proceeds to blow up, to the mild consternation of his nearest and dearest. It might be better transposed into a novel. It might be better directed. It might be better left alone.

Music

Andrew Clements

Parlando

Toussaint *English National Opera; further performances 7, 12 and 14 October*
Liszt Festival of London *Wigmore Hall; further events throughout October*

English National Opera's policy on contemporary opera now seems clear enough. Mount productions of new works, but make sure that they are colourful, superficially dramatic and expansive enough to suggest an all-inclusive profundity. Above all, make sure the musical idiom is easy to assimilate. How otherwise does one explain a repertory that contains Henze's *The Bassarids*, Penderecki's *The Devils of Loudun* and now David Blake's *Toussaint*?

Blake's new work is his first for the stage and represents a considerable act of faith on the part of the ENO that commissioned it. It is a long three-acter (nearly four hours including intervals) to a libretto by the novelist and critic Anthony Ward, who like Blake teaches at the University of York. The subject is the rise and fall of the first black liberationist Toussaint Louverture, who guided the people of Saint Domingue out of French colonial slavery into the first independent black republic, Haiti, at the beginning of the last century. Toussaint is shown developing his political and military muscle, discovering the conflicts between his public and private lives and between his republican ideals and the exigencies of fighting a war of independence, and finally being ensnared by power politics and imprisoned by Napoleon until his death in the Jura Mountains. One of his followers then becomes the first ruler of Haiti.

Blake and Ward tell this story in 22 straightforward scenes with every detail spelt out and each contemporary parallel heavily underlined. The concern is clearly with immediate comprehension, and Blake's music is designed to obscure the text as little as possible. As a result, far too often it falls back on a colourless *parlando* to deliver the message; lyrical writing for the voices is confined to set-pieces, usually in pastiche. It all makes for a slow-moving, prosaic piece of theatre. The introduction of a Brechtian commentator, Mars Plaisir, valet to Toussaint but spending most of the opera outside the action addressing the audience, is largely redundant. The events of the plot are so clearly spelt out, their relevance to the 20th century so obvious (and generally commonplace), that Plaisir's discussion of them is both unsubtle and unfunny. Although the opera is nominally about its main character, his personality remains little explored, and the motives for some of his actions largely unexplained. Lack of depth in the characterisations extends to the whole cast. Composer and librettist appear to have relied on the wealth of detail and event to sustain the opera's three acts, yet without any depth it makes a long evening, despite fine performances from Sarah Walker (as Toussaint's long-suffering wife) and Neil Howlett in the title role.

Only a qualified welcome also to the Liszt Festival of London. A Liszt revival is something which has been due for a long time, but I cannot see this diffuse event as starting it. Concerts under its umbrella are sprouting up all over London between now and the end of October; the opening series was of piano, vocal and instrumental works at the Wigmore Hall; mostly familiar fare, but rarely-heard choral and orchestral works are promised later. Perhaps the promoters, BBC Radio London, should have concentrated their efforts into a shorter, more discriminating series of concerts of real Liszt rarities, rather than trying to swamp the market with as many works as they could organise.

Weekend Competition

No 2484 **Set by Tim Hopkins**

Eric Partridge has recently published a dictionary of catch-phrases. Competitors are asked to invent new slogans and adages which might catch on in time to make the second edition. Maximum of 5 entries; by 21 October.

Result of No 2481 Set by M. Gracechurch

We know you all have fantasies about what goes on in the Comp Complex. We asked you to set them down in the style of any modern writer.

Report **by Spiro Keats**

Kingsley Amis has been snooping round the Complex, in search of material for that forthcoming *Oxford Book of Light Verse* of his. Little Keith has been sucking up to him, of course, and even Fat Jeff gives him the odd lustrous gaze (Keith is thinking of his oft-rejected novel, Jeff of his vanity-press booklet of verse: they both seem to think, quite erroneously, that he can help get them published). As it was, I gave Amis my semi-autobiographical 180,000-line prose poem – to read, edit, print, promote, etc. In addition, he accepted two recent Comp winners for his *Oxford Book*. I shall reveal the identities of the two immortals next week – or not, depending entirely on how I feel. As for this week (£6 apiece, if you live to spend it), I must say it was suicidal folly for competitors to include their addresses with

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their entries. You will all be hearing from my people very soon.

Compchester

The Comp Complex . . . *Du lieber Gott!*
I dream about it quite a lot:
The book-lined shelves, the potted palm,
The aura of deceptive calm,
Where Cambridge men with brows *that* high
Vet entries with a beady eye,
And secretaries bring the tea
Each afternoon at ten to three.
Ah God! to get a friendly smile
From Little Keith at Great Turnstile,
And after weeks of doubt and pain
To see my name in print again;
Oh, can you say with certainty?
And is there money still for me?

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

A Day in the Life of Fat Jeff

After breakfast, armed guards marched the ragged prisoners back into the grim cellars of Great Turnstile. Fat Jeffski licked his spoon and shoved it into his tattered felt boot. Lenin the Unlucky gnawed his 200-gram bread ration and eyed the new arrival.

The barbed-wire gate swung open and Warders kicked the gang into the Comp Complex. It was –27. Icy winds frosted the stone floor, where old lag Spirov Keatsurin dried his string-tied coat round a solitary candle.

The horrified newcomer gasped, 'You *sleep* and *work* in *here*?'

'Yes comrade.'

'SILENCE! YOU SWINE!' Commandant Howardovich, 'The Tartar', appeared in the doorway, followed by four Work-Superintendents. They emptied vast bags of entries on to the floor.

'Now!' snarled the Tartar, 'This quota to be completed by sundown. Remember! No tits, clits, shits, and similar double entendres, or it's two months in the H.W.E. cells.'

'What's H.W.E.?' breathed the tyro.

'Hand-written Entries,' murmured Keatsurin. 'Absolute hell! Only one thing worse – Word-counting. They seldom survive *that* . . .'

GERRY HAMILL

Of Mice and Mice

'Aw hell, Fat Jeff,' whined Little Keith. 'Can't we give him sump'n?'

'Nothin'.' Fat Jeff's jaw jutted determinedly. 'Not even half a dollar?' Little Keith's eyes were pleading. Fat Jeff stared at him wondering why, for God's sake, he didn't leave Little Keith and this two-bit job. He stood up, looking into Little Keith's soft eyes.

'We ain't gonna give him nuthin' and I'll tell you why. You give that guy anythin' and he'll start thinkin' he's somebody. You're a soft touch, that's your trouble.'

'I won't be no trouble any more, Fat Jeff. You let me give him half a dollar and I won't say a word all day. I won't say a word if you give all the rest of the prize money to all the favourites like you always do.'

Fat Jeff nodded, thinking. It would cost him nothing to let Keith have his way just once.

'Okay,' he said. '50p for J. Y. Watson.'

'Gee, thanks, Fat Jeff,' breathed Little Keith with gratitude.

J. Y. WATSON

Tony Miles

Chess

No 54 **August Chess Problems**

The August problems were rather a messy lot, with some of the solutions not really as clear as one might desire. My apologies to any confused solvers.

Problem 45 (3b2k1/3b4/1p3pPK/p1p1p3/P1P5/1P2B3/2B5/8) did have a convincing solution: 1. B-N5! threatening P-N7 and B-R7ch (if 1. . . . P x B; 2. P-N7) and, I stated, black must lose a piece. Mr N. Kyprianou points out a defence that saves the piece: 1. . . . B-K3; 2. P-N7, P-K5! 3. B x KP, P-B4! – but not the game – 4. B-Q5! B x B; 5. P x B, B x Bch (or . . . B-B2; 6. B-K7); 6. K x B, K x P; 7. K x P, K-B2; 8. K-K5, K-K2; 9. P-Q6ch, K-Q1 (or K-Q2; 10. K-Q5); 10. K-K6, K-K1; 11. P-Q7ch, K-Q1; 12. K-Q6 etc.

Problem 46 (3R1r1k/5q1p/4Qp1b/p3nP2/1p6/7P/PPPR2P1/7K) was taken from the game Ljubojevic v. Milicevic (Yugoslavia '74). After the 'solution' 1. R(2)-Q7 black has . . . Q-N1! This was overlooked not only by myself but also by Mr Milicevic, Mr Ljubojevic and the editorial staff of *Chess Informant*, but not by about 80 per cent of the competition entrants! After 1. . . . Q-N1 white has several ways of picking up another pawn with a theoretically won position, but not without – as they say – technical difficulties. *En passant*, I should mention that 1. R(2)-Q5 is also worth a try.

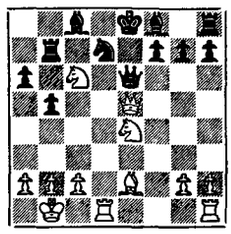
Problem 48 (8/R3bpk1/3qb1p1/4p2p/2p4p/2P2BP1/1PQ2P2/6K1) was the cause of much controversy. After 1. Q-R4? (I retain my opinion that this is a mistake) P-K5! 2. B x KP, Q-Q7! I admit that 3. Q-B6! is superior to the moves I gave but the situation is still not totally clear. By way of illustration of this I give a possible continuation suggested by Mr J. D. Taylor: 3. . . . P-Q3; 4. K-N2, P-N4!? 5. P x P, B x P; 6. K x B, P-R5ch; 7. K-N2 (not 7. K x P, Q-B5ch mating), P-R6ch; 8. K-B3, Q-Q8ch; 9. K-B4, (Neither 9. K-N3, Q-N5ch nor 9. K-K3, Q-K8ch achieve anything.) Q-Q7ch; 10. K-K5, Q x NPch; 11. K-Q6 (11. K-Q4, Q-Q7ch is a perpetual – 12. K-B5? Q x Pch), Q-B5ch; 12. K-K7 (again not 12. K-B5? Q x Pch), Q-R5ch (now white really must take the draw – 13. K-Q6, Q-B5ch – if he doesn't . . .), 13. K-K8? Q-R1ch! 14. K-K7, Q-B1 mate! I confess that I don't believe *all* of this, but it's a nice idea. In self defence I must point out that I only asked which is the better move (1. Q-K4 or Q-R4) and that after 1. Q-K4! black has absolutely *no* counterplay.

However, if Mr Brooks (the chief supporter of 1. Q-R4) wishes to continue the debate, I would be only too delighted to supply him with Mr Taylor's address . . .

Strangely enough, first prize in the August competition goes to Mr Taylor (£15), 2nd to Mr Sobey (£10) and 3rd to Mr Burn (£5).

Problem 54

White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NS post-marked not later than 19 October.



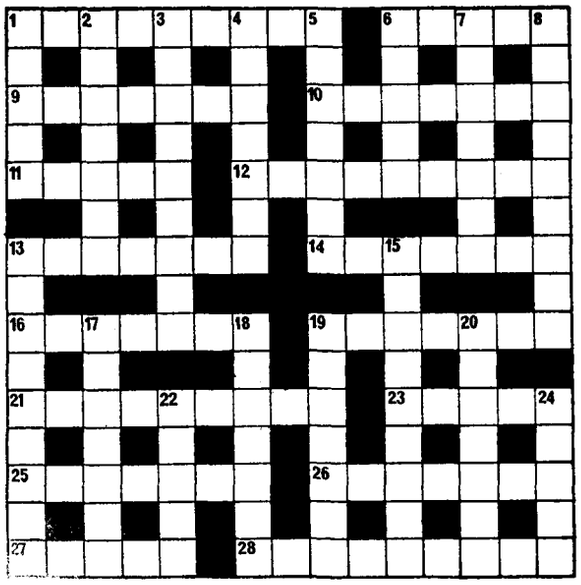
Solution to Problem 52

a) White wins e.g. 1. . . . K-B2; 2. P-R6, K-N1; 3. K-N1! P-B/N/R6; 4. K-B/N/R2 etc or 1. . . . P-R6ch; 2. K-R2 see (b).

b) White still wins: 1. K-N1! P-B/N/R6; 2. K-B/N/R2, K-B2; 3. P-N8=Qch! K x Q; 4. P-R6 – Zugzwang.

Weekend Crossword 1236

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1236, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 18 October.



ACROSS

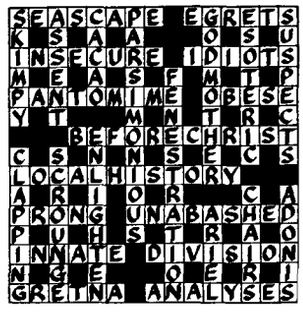
1. Plant collection is the woman's element (9).
6. Something for fixing back a climbing plant (5).
9. Some err badly resulting in a guilty conscience (7).
10. Watch expert going quietly in strange motion (7).
11. Protected without a soft front being put on (5).
12. Abuses revision of later list (9).
13. A battlefield would make this cake burn (7).
14. The plant would have to work if the arbitrator were dismissed (7).
16. In which there is no loss about this place (7).
19. Out in the open there is an old vehicle outside the place for taxis (7).
21. Plant which might make one weed less (9).
23. The vessel is turning about nothing (5).
25. Rock for tearing apart (7).
26. Thrill from the tenth 24 (7).
27. City to avoid? (5).
28. 'O! call back ——, bid time return' (*K. Richard II*) (9).

DOWN

1. If he changed his tail the ancient warrior might become an animal (5).
2. Raced with a crazy interruption in fast time (7).
3. Fly hence — dear Romeo is undone! (9).
4. One may skate on rice scattered in a liquid (7).
5. Has a wife in every port and has to wed many (7).
6. The animal in a vile murderer (5).
7. I go in to a man freely and in lively manner (7).
8. Relative target (4, 5).
13. Dismiss one encouraged for not having a straight stance (9).
15. Eastern girl is something for the shoulder! (9).
17. Shifty dealer given about a thousand for stone (7).
18. Artlessly giving denial about evil circulating (7).
19. Fixes supporters round the broadcast set (7).
20. Related in type and colour (7).
22. If we were removed the pure would be a success (5).
24. Recover from a series of strokes (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1234


SEASCAPE EGRETS
K S A A O S U
INSECURE IDIOTS
M E A S F M T P
PANTOMIME OBESE
Y T M N T R C
BEFORE CHRIST
C S N N S E C S
LOCAL HISTORY
A R I O R C A
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P U H S T R A O
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Prizewinners to No 1234

K. Edinborough (Colchester)
Baldur Simonarson (Reykjavik
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AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Institute of Advanced Studies

DIRECTOR OF THE RESEARCH SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL SCIENCES

The University, seeks to appoint a Head of the Research School of Physical Sciences to succeed Professor Robert Street, FIP, FAIP, FAA who will be leaving the University in February 1978 to take up the post of Vice-Chancellor at the University of Western Australia.

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The Research School of Physical Sciences carries out basic experimental and theoretical research into selected fields of the physical and mathematical sciences. The work is organised into seven departments and three smaller units with about 100 academic staff, 60 research students and postdoctoral fellows and 200 supporting staff. There are no undergraduate students. The person appointed will hold a Chair in the University until retiring age. The term of office as Director will be fixed by the University in consultation with the person recommended.

Those who may be interested in being considered for this appointment are invited to write, as soon as possible, to the Vice-Chancellor from whom further information may be obtained.

G. E. Dicker
Academic Registrar

PO Box 4,
Canberra, ACT, 2600,
Australia

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New Zealand

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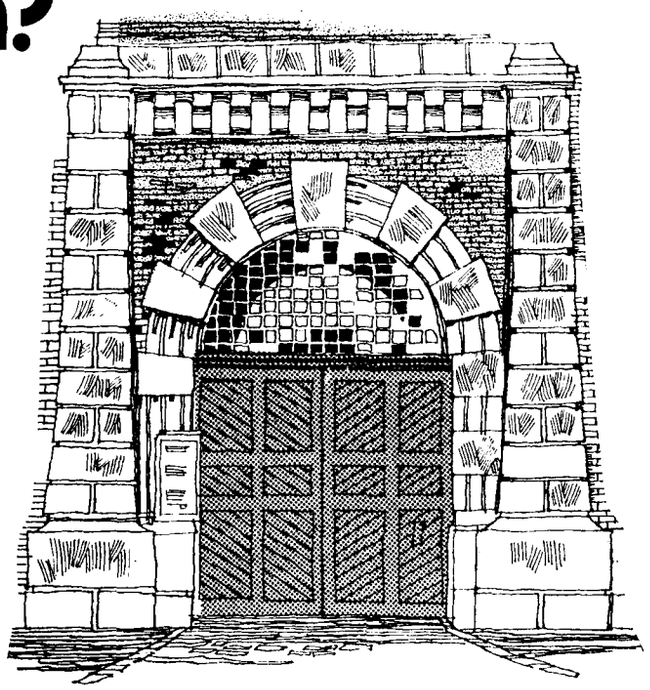

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Bookworm

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M. LONDONER (47), no ties, secure position, non-smoker, enjoys books, music, hopes to meet similar type lady. Box 8982.

WARM, considerate prof. m., 45, divorcé, car owner with sufficient savings to pay deposit on home; interests: home-making, music, theatre, country walks, photography, sks warm, caring, attractive, unencumbered prof. f. (pref. teacher) under 44 for uncommitted give-take relationship and who knows? North London. Box 8885.

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SINGLE FEMALE, enjoys most things, seeks balanced, easygoing male, 38/40. London area. Box 8946.

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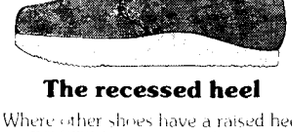

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Vol. 94 No. 2429

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company). 836 6404. Recorded bkg info: 836 5332. 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'Troilus and Cressida', 'Romeo and Juliet' in repertoire. See daily press for dates and times .RSC also at The Warehouse at Donmar Theatre. Week of 10 Oct.: 'Macbeth' (sold out), Brecht's 'Schweyk'. And at Piccadilly Theatre in 'Wild Oats' and Savoy Theatre in 'Man and Superman'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. 'The Dog Ran Away' by Brother Jonathan OSF. Directed by Michael Rudman. Evgs 8 p.m. Sats 5 & 8.

THE ALCHEMIST by Ben Jonson. Ipswich Theatre. 6-22 Oct. Tel. 0473 53725.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'Volpone', 'The Madras House' &- 'The Plough & The Stars', 'Bedroom Farce', 'The Lady from Maxims', 'Sir is Winning', 'Judgement' & 'The Passion'. (£1 Promenade tickets). See daily press for dates & times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. Janet Suzman in 'The Good Woman of Setzuan'. Opens 10 October at 7 p.m.

THEATRE ROYAL, WINDSOR. 95 61107. Peter Shaffer's 'Equus' with Ian McCulloch & Marc Harrison.

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Concert

THE STORY OF RAGTIME at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, SE1, on Monday 10 October at 7.45 p.m. Keith Nichols and his Ragtime Orchestra perform rags by Scott Joplin, Eubie Blake, James P. Johnson, Jelly Roll Morton, Fats Waller and *others, with vocalist Johnny M. Tickets:* £2, £1.65, £1.35, £1.10, 85p. from RFH Box Office, SE1 8XX (Tel. 01-928 3191).

Entertainment

LANDSCAPE AFTER BATTLE. British Première of Polish film directed by Andrzej Wajda. Sunday 9 October 2 p.m. (doors open 1.30 p.m.) Phoenix Cinema, East Finchley, N2. Tickets £1. Sponsored by Morning Star.

Exhibitions

GANYMED GALLERY, 11 Gt Turnstile, WC1. 405 9836. New lithographs by Brett Whiteley, a series of eight studies of the nude & two single prints, View of the Garden & Flowers on the Table. Illustrated catalogue 75p. on request.

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY
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GRESHAM LECTURES IN DIVINITY
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AUBERON WAUGH
will speak on
LIBEL AND THE BRITISH PRESS
on Friday 14 Oct at 8.30 p.m. at Sutton Central Library, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, Surrey.
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Details from Katherine Chedburn 01-643 4461.

WILLIAM TEMPLE ASSOCIATION (London Branch) Meeting Wed. 12 Oct. 7.30 (for 8.0). Bob Edwards speaks on 'Is the Church of England Serious About its Laity? Liddon House, 24 South Audley St, W1.

YOUNG MAPAM are going to Hillel, panel of speakers including Peretz Merhav (Intl Sec. of Mapam, Israel), who will discuss the role of Mapam in Britain and Israel. All are welcome. Hillel House, 1 Endsleigh St WC1, at 8 p.m. Sunday 9 October.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, Blind Lane, Bourne End, Bucks (Tel. 06285 26464). Sun. 9 Oct. Swami Tripurananda on 'The Samkhya Philosophy' at 4 p.m. All welcome. Vedanta magazine 40p.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 8 Oct. 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 11 Oct. 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. All welc. S.a.e. for full prog.

THEOSOPHY, Informal Forum on Basic Theosophy. Sun. 9 Oct. 8 p.m. All welcome. S.a.e. free pamphlet, talks programme, booklist. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, W2.

REFORM OF SUPPLEMENTARY benefits Fabian Seminar, 31 Wellington Street WC2, Saturday 22 October. Speakers include Ruth Lister and David Donnison 10.30-4.30. Tickets £1 from Fabian Society 11 Dartmouth St. London SW1.

RONALD HAYMAN, writer will give a lecture in English, on 'Artaud and the English Theatre' on Wednesday 12 October at 6.15 p.m. at the French Institute Queensberry Place, SW7. Tel.: 01-589 6211 ext. 38. Admission free.

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SHAW SOCIETY REUNION, 14 Oct. 7.30 p.m. Conway Hall. Red Lion Square. Admission £1 incl. refreshments. Speakers Ellen Pollock; T. F. Evans. Non-members welcome.

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